

SHORT STORIES

1862



COUSIN JULIET.

BY MRS. CAROLINE ORNE.

" Look, Wilmot—quick, before she's lost in the crowd."

" Before who is lost in the crowd?"

" The lady I was speaking to yon about last evening."

" Where is she? which way must I look?"

" There, just at the left of the group standing in front of the window, where those fine engravings are exhibited."

" Do you mean her in the cloak of rich black velvet, and the bonnet with a black lace veil, and ornamented with tufts of red flowers?"

"Tea."

" Did you say you were acquainted with her? " No, I am not acquainted with her." " But you've seen her several times, if I rightly remember what you said last evening?"

" Yes, within the last three weeks I have seen her as many as six or seven times."

" Where?"

" It appears to me, Wilmot, that you catechise me pretty closely."

" I have a good reason for so doing, as I will explain to you at some suitable time. Now, Lyndon, tell me when and where you have seen that lady."

" The first time I saw her was at the theatre."

" Was she alone?"

" What a question, Wilmot I believe it is not customary for ladies to go alone to the theatre."

" True—I forgot. She was with a party of friends, perhaps?"

" No one was with her except a gentleman, as may be safely inferred, they two being the only persons in the box."

" And you thought the lady pretty?"

" No, the word pretty is a very poor one to apply to her. It conveys no adequate idea of a face and air like hers. She was beautiful— superb—angelic."

" The idea conveyed by such a string of high- sounding words, is vague and unsatisfactory. In the first place, if you please, tell me what her complexion was."

" A clear brunette."

" And pale?"

" Yes, when in a state of perfect repose, but all the finer passages of the play were sure to send a rich and eloquent glow to her cheeks in a way which told of quick and changeful currents of feeling."

" Changeful is a word well chosen in her case, I should say, and may be applied to her in more ways than one. "

" You know the lady?" said Lyndon, turning sharply round, so that he could look Wilmot in the face, the paleness of which startled him.

" I do," was the answer.

" I am rejoiced to hear it, that is, if you are on terms so friendly, that I may, through you, obtain an introduction to her."

" Excuse me, Lyndon, we will speak of that some other time. Now, I beg that you will answer me one more question."

"Certainly—but how pale you look. You are unwell."

" No, no—I was seized with a sudden pain, but it's gone now."

" Well, your question—what is it?"

" The person you saw with her at the theatre— did you know him?"

"No, but I inquired his name of Harry Harcourt, who knows everybody, and—"

"No matter whom you inquired of—tell me at once, if you know. Why do you keep me in suspense?"

"For the simple reason that you interrupted me before I had time to tell you."

"Well, was this Harry Harcourt able to give you the desired information?"

"He was. His name, he said, was Lucian Warder."

"There will be no need of my making a note of it, for I shall be certain not to forget it," replied Wilmot, with a faint attempt to smile.

"By the way, Wilmot," said Lyndon, puzzled at his friend's close questioning, and the agitation he so palpably manifested, "when are you going to redeem the promise you made me a few days since?"

"Promise, did you say? What promise?" said Wilmot, with the air of a man whose mind was engrossed with something else.

"Why, to invite me home with you, and give me an opportunity to judge for myself of the wife you are so proud of for her beauty and many good and attractive qualities."

"When I made the promise, I thought I had good reason to be proud of her."

"And doubtless had, and still have, and yet, as I have hinted, I should like to have an opportunity of judging for myself. What would those of our fellow-students say, who used when we were in college, to call us the modern Damon and Pythias, if they knew you had been married full three months, without ever expressing a wish to introduce me to the woman of your choice? I have half a mind to invite myself to dine with you to-day."

"No, not to-day—not to-day," said Wilmot, quickly, and deprecatingly.

"I see," said Lyndon, smiling, "that you are determined not to invite me to visit you, so I shall avail myself of the privilege of an old friend, and suddenly pop in upon you some day, when you least expect it. Good morning."

"Stay one minute," said Wilmot.

Lyndon turned back.

"The first time you saw the woman we've been speaking of, was at the theatre?"

"Yes."

"And three weeks ago?"

"Not far from that."

"I wish you could tell the exact evening."

"You may do that yourself, if you can recollect what day it was that you started on your journey south."

"That I can readily do—it was Wednesday."

"Then it was Wednesday evening that I first saw her."

"You are certain?"

"I am."

"There must be no room for doubt."

"There is none. As you may remember, we happened to fall in with each other near the railway station, the morning you were going to leave for Richmond."

"Yes, I recollect."

"Soon after parting with you, I met Harry Harcourt, and he spoke to me about going to the theatre that evening."

"And you went?"

"Yes, and it is the only time I have attended this season. Of course, therefore, there can be no mistake."

"None, whatever—thank you." And turning abruptly away, he commenced walking rapidly, in the direction of his own home. For a few moments, Lyndon remained where they had parted, regarding him as he hurried along the sidewalk, with a look of much perplexity.

"What has come over Wilmot?" he murmured half audibly. "He appears as if he was demented, or—but no, that cannot be;" and leaving the sentence unfinished, he proceeded in a direction opposite to that which had been taken by his friend.

Wilmot stood on his own doorstep in an almost inconceivably short time after leaving Lyndon, when the distance accomplished was taken into view. He rang the bell with such force as to threaten its demolition, and yet the summons, imperative as it was, failed to be promptly answered.

"That stupid girl," said he, to himself; "does she think that she is at liberty to keep people waiting at the door all day? If she does, she'll find herself mistaken. She shall be dismissed at once." And he gave a second vigorous pull at the bell.

This time, ere the quick, sharp tinkle had reached its culminating point, the door was opened by a girl, who manifested a good deal of hurry and trepidation. This did not escape him, as he unceremoniously thrust her aside, for which there was certainly some excuse, for it must be confessed, that the manner she stood in the doorway, was not exactly favorable to his speedy entrance.

"Where's your mistress?" said he.

"If she hasn't gone up stairs, sir, she's in there," replied the girl, pointing to the keeping-room door, and at the same time looking somewhat frightened.

"That can soon be decided," said he, opening the door.

As he did so, he saw another door on the opposite side of the apartment which opened on a back staircase, hastily drawn to, though it still remained slightly ajar. He could distinctly hear the sound of footsteps ascending the stairway, and as he entered the room, he saw his wife in a hurried manner, he imagined, take some needle-work from a little fairy-looking basket near her. Wilmot cast a sharp glance at her, then round the room, but did not speak. Mrs. Wilmot saw that a cloud darkened his brow, and after some hesitation, ventured to address him.

"You didn't call on Aunt Helen, I suspect, as you thought of doing when you left home this morning," she said, "or you wouldn't have returned so soon."

"No," he replied. "As your engagements were such as to prevent you from accompanying me, I gave it up."

"I regret that you didn't call, for I could perceive by what she said when I last saw her, that she thinks you neglect her."

"You have no such fear on your own account, I suppose?"

"I can't say that I have, for Aunt Helen is neither exacting nor unreasonable, and she knows that I always call whenever I can."

"Which means when there are no such powerful counteractions as the theatre, or, perhaps, a moonlight excursion. Even the engravings at Weston's would doubtless be by her as well as you, deemed a good excuse for refusing the invitation I gave you this morning to call on her."

"I am unable to comprehend your meaning," said Mrs. Wilmot. "Pray explain."

"Explanations are unnecessary."

"I must remain in the dark, then."

"At any rate, you won't pretend that you didn't, for the space of ten, or at least, five minutes, stand in front of Weston's show-window looking at the engravings."

"When?"

"This morning—half an hour ago, perhaps."

"I've not been absent from here a moment to-day."

"Look at that sofa, madam, and see those witnesses against you."

"O, you mean that cloak and bonnet?"

"I do."

"I had forgotten they were there—they belong—"

"Yes, I thought you had forgotten them."

"You think they belong to me!"

"I know they do. Haven't I seen you wear them twenty times?"

Mrs. Wilmot made no reply, but rising from her chair, went to the door which opened on the back staircase.

"Stay," said Wilmot. "Before you leave this room, let me tell you that I was aware that some one hastily retreated through that door at the moment of my entrance."

"I didn't suppose that you entered in time to catch sight of her."

"Her, did you say?"

"Yes, 'twas my cousin, Juliet Bruce."

"Rather singular that she should be so anxious to avoid me."

"It does seem so, but she had particular reasons for not wishing to see you just then."

"And Jane—you had taken her into your counsels, it seems. The girl actually placed herself in the doorway in such a manner as to bar my entrance. I was obliged to push her aside."

"Poor Jane! she wasn't expecting to see you, and was sadly nonplussed, as only a few minutes previous, I directed her if a gentleman called to wait on him into the drawing-room."

"You did?"

"Yes, but you don't seem satisfied," and opening the door near which she stood, she called, "Juliet, Juliet."

Light footsteps were heard, and then the question, "What do you wish, Agnes?"

"Have you changed your dress yet?"

"No."

"Come down just as you are, then."

"I must know who has come first."

"Your Cousin Edgar."

"Then you've told him?"

"No, come and let him see for himself."

The answer to this was a musical laugh, and the next minute Juliet Bruce swept into the room with an affectation of haughty grace, which, with her stately and symmetrical figure, was in admirable keeping, as far as can be gathered from the annals of royalty, with the regal appearance of Elizabeth, Queen of England, whom she sought to impersonate, when that imperious lady was in her prime.

The skirt of her dress, of rich, white brocade embroidered with gold, was very full, and faced with stripes of minever in the robing form. The bodice of the same material as the skirt, was slashed with purple velvet edged with gold, as were the sleeves, of the form which in the modern nomenclature of costume, is sometimes termed *gigot*. Her waist was encircled by a jewelled girdle, and her head-dress consisted of a coronet of gems, surmounted with a wreath of laurel leaves made of gold gauze. From this wreath descended lappets ornamented with gold and

pearls, the effect of which was exceedingly graceful and striking. But no part of her dress enhanced the natural grace and majesty of her appearance so much as a mantle of purple velvet, trimmed with rows of ermine and gold lace, which was attached to the shoulders with gold cordons and tassels, and fell behind in a long train. She recognized Wilmot by a slight, though very dignified motion of the head, and then held out her hand for him to kiss with an air of urbanity, mingled with a haughty condescension, which was inimitable.

"Kneel, Wilmot—kneel," said his wife, with difficulty maintaining her gravity, at the perplexity, half real, half assumed, which he now exhibited.

"Why?" he demanded.

"Don't you know that you are in the presence of Elizabeth, Queen of England?"

"If I am, I shan't kneel till I know whether the carpet has been well swept to-day or not," said he, laughing. "But, seriously, tell me what is the meaning of this. I'm at a loss to comprehend."

"The more you are perplexed, the better I shall be pleased," said his wife. "We've been preparing to give you a pleasant surprise, but you are like the child, who, in its impatient curiosity to find out what is inside it, destroys the gilded toy designed for its amusement."

"The truth is, Cousin Edgar," said Juliet, "we have for the last three weeks been planning a series of social gatherings, where a number—more or less as may be convenient—are to appear in costume, for the entertainment of the rest."

"I take it you mean a species of private theatricals."

"Yes, if that term better suits you, though we intend by no means to strictly adhere to what is usually designated by that name. Our initiatory was to have been next Thursday evening; a few of the scenes of Kenilworth having been dramatized for the purpose by a friend."

"Yes," said Mrs. Wilmot, "and in honor of a certain gentleman's birthday."

"It cannot be that you mean me?" said Mr. Wilmot.

"Why not?" said Juliet. "Are you not twenty-five next Thursday?"

"Yes, I believe I am."

"And I am certain of it, if the record in the old family Bible, so carefully treasured by Aunt Helen, is correct."

"Much obliged to you," said Wilmot, "for the intended compliment."

"And now," said Mrs. Wilmot, addressing her husband, "tell me, truly, who you supposed

it was, that left the room in such a hurry, at the moment of your entrance."

"Spare me, Agnes—if I *must* be put to the question, don't let it be in the presence of so stern a judge as Queen Elizabeth," said he, with an air of mock deprecation.

"If that's the way you slander me," said Juliet, "I shall object to having any leniency extended towards you. What if I should tell you by way of retaliation, that a gentleman by the name of Lucian Warder was in your mind?"

"Why, I should give you credit for being more of an enchantress than I have always thought you to be."

"I suspect you didn't see me when I passed you this morning, as you and a gentleman stood talking together so earnestly, just below Weston's, did you?"

"No."

"I thought not, or you wouldn't imagine that I have any claim to the occult art at which you hint."

"Is it possible that you passed us without our seeing you?"

"I certainly did, nor was there anything strange in it, for you both appeared to be so absorbed in what you were saying, as to pay no attention to what was going on around you. I passed along slowly, intending to speak to you, but a few words which I overheard, caused me to alter my mind."

"You know it is said that listeners never hear any good of themselves—what did you hear?"

"I'm unable to recall the exact words. I found, however, that you had mistaken me, while I stood looking at those engravings at Weston's, for some one else."

"I dare say he thought it was I," said Mrs. Wilmot.

"To confess the truth, I did think so," said Wilmot. "I wouldn't have hesitated, had it been necessary for me to do so, to take my oath that it was you."

"And you were equally certain that it was Agnes whom the gentleman saw at the theatre with Lucian Warder?" said Juliet.

"I was, for the description he gave of the lady applied to her exactly."

"The same description would apply equally well to either of us," said Juliet, "and yet, when seen together, we look but little alike."

"It was her dress that misled you to-day," said Mrs. Wilmot.

"Yes. I couldn't see her face, and her height and general appearance are the same as yours."

"I don't see how it could have happened that you have never seen Juliet before to-day, since

we concluded to dress alike this winter. There has scarcely been a day that she hasn't called."

"The truth is," said Juliet, "I have taken those times to call, when I was pretty certain that Cousin Edgar was absent."

"Much obliged to you," said he.

"Don't be ill-natured about it—it was only because I wished for the benefit of your wife's excellent judgment and taste relative to my costume and other matters, which, as principal directress of the anticipated entertainment, naturally fell under my supervision."

And, as usual, knowing me to be absent this morning, you took the opportunity to call?"

"I did. I sent a note to Agnes last evening, not to fail to be at home, as I wished to try the effect of my costume, which I sent by the same messenger that carried my note."

"And that was why you declined calling on Aunt Helen this morning?" said Mr. Wilmot, to his wife.

"Partly that."

"What other reason had you?"

"Didn't I tell you that I was expecting a gentleman to call, and that Jane had been directed to wait on him into the drawing-room?"

"Yes, you did," was his answer; and though he tried hard to keep his brow smooth and serene, it was contracted by a slight frown.

Just as the words left his lips, the door-bell gave a musical ring.

"He's come at last, Juliet," said Mrs. Wilmot.

"A gentleman wishes to see Mr. Wilmot," said Jane, putting her head inside the sitting-room door.

"It isn't the lieutenant, after all," said Mrs. Wilmot. "Where can he be? If this is the way he is going to keep his appointments, I advise you to look out sharp, Juliet, for a laggard in love, and a dastard in war, generally go together."

Before Juliet had time to answer, Wilmot returned, conducting his friend Lyndon. The ladies supposed, whoever the visitor might prove to be, Wilmot would show him into the drawing-room, and Juliet finding that it would be impossible to leave the room without attracting attention, decided to remain where she was. She might be influenced in her decision, from finding that the gentleman was the same she had seen in the street with Wilmot. The singularity, as well as the almost dazzling splendor of her dress, caused the eye of Lyndon to be first directed towards her.

"Can it be possible that she is Wilmot's wife?" thought he, as he recalled to mind the conversation which had that morning passed between them.

A speedy introduction to each of the ladies put him right, as to that question, though he could not fail to see that the resemblance between them was such that a description of the person of the one, would apply equally well to the other. Lyndon being eminently social—a quality, which, in most cases is apt to be contagious—though three of those present had met for the first time, they were all soon engaged in an easy and lively conversation.

It was not long before another gentleman was added to their number. This, as may be surmised, was no other than Lucian Warder, whom Mrs. Wilmot and Juliet had been expecting, but had nearly given up. Warder, a lieutenant in the United States Navy, was one of those who are always sure to win the love and admiration of all who have the pleasure of cultivating their acquaintance. His presence, therefore, promoted, instead of holding in check, the vivacity and genial flow of spirits which reigned predominant.

Wilmot, who had hurried home with his mind filled with gloomy suspicion, while he contributed his full share towards encouraging and increasing the cheerfulness and good fellowship of the little circle, inwardly reprobated the carelessness into which he had almost unconsciously fallen in his intercourse with those few (among whom Lyndon was the chief) whose friendship was not of that ephemeral kind which needs the sunshine of prosperity to give it vitality. Lunch was ordered, and while they partook of the well-chosen viands, rendered more appetizing by the faultless manner in which they were served, they with equal zest discoursed of the happiness which might be anticipated by keeping bright each golden link in the chain of friendship.

"I think," said Lyndon, "that my organ of adhesiveness must be remarkably well developed—a fact, concerning which I have more reason to congratulate myself than I had hitherto imagined"—here he glanced at the ladies—"or I should have been repelled by your coldness."

"I feel that you are right," replied Wilmot, "and while truth compels me to make the admission, I take shame to myself upon the imputation. 'Twas wrong—ay, mean, to treat with indifference the friend who once—you and I know when—stood by me in the hour of adversity, the moment I had found a warm home-nest in the midst of flowers and sunshine. But already my selfishness and ingratitude were beginning to bring their own punishment, as the little incidents which have this morning caused me so much perplexity and annoyance could never have happened, had I in the first place, in that free and cordial manner to which our relative

positions entitled you, given you to understand that you could never, under a roof owned by me, be otherwise than welcome, whenever you chose to call."

"Lieutenant Warder," said Mrs. Wilmot, "what character do you assume in the festivities of next Thursday evening?"

"That of Sir Walter Raleigh, so some of the ladies say."

"And Mr. Lyndon must take that of the Earl of Leicester," said Juliet.

"Rather a short notice," said he, in reply.

"That is true, but remember that we shall depend on you."

"I won't forget," returned Lyndon, and turning to Mrs. Wilmot, he asked if she didn't intend to take part with them.

"I shall not," she replied. "Mr. Wilmot and I are to have the privilege of being among the spectators."

"I shall object to that," said Lyndon.

"The entertainment is to be in honor of my Cousin Edgar's birthday," said Juliet, "otherwise they wouldn't get off so easily. By the way, Warder," she added, turning to the young lieutenant, "I have received an answer to the invitation I sent Adnah Mervale, and she writes me that she will come."

"The young lady to whom Warder is engaged," said Mrs. Wilmot to her husband.

"I thought," said he, "that he was Cousin Juliet's intended."

"No," replied his wife, "Juliet is free."

“ Then,” said Wilmot, turning to Lyndon and lowering his voice, “I shall cherish the hope that ere long you may be my cousin as well as friend.”

“ If I am not, it wont be my fault,” was the answer.

As the entertainment in prospect was of a character to be witnessed rather than described, it will be unnecessary to do more than to mention that each of the characters was well sustained, from the haughty and queenly Elizabeth down to the awkward Blount, who with his crimson stockings and shoes adorned with enormous yellow roses, did the original to perfection, in the way he tried to ape the courtier by turning out his toes, so as to produce an “ unhappy amble,” even more ludicrous in its effects, if possible, than the contrary extreme.

[ORIGINAL.]

THE MYSTERY OF GERALD FORRESTER.

BY W. B. SANFORD.

A LONE house, in the midst of a flat plain, unenlivened save by a few stunted firs, had often taken my attention while riding through the township of E——, in the spring of 1840. I had been advised to ride daily for my health, and I knew no more attractive region than that which lay a mile beyond the house I am writing of. There, all that is beautiful in nature, of wood and stream and mountain, of upland and vale, cluster together; while afar off the roar of the sea subsides into a soft murmur before it reaches the ear. I had explored every spot around on foot, leaving my horse at a friendly blacksmith's, and with each day that I did so, came returning health and strength.

I was not satisfied, however. That old, solitary house was continually whetting my curiosity. It was evidently inhabited, although the shutters were almost entirely kept closed. Once, in an early morning ride, I had seen a slight female figure at a little distance from the house, but she had hidden herself almost immediately behind the stunted fir that stood nearest her, so that I could not see her face. The wind blew a lock of dark hair around the tree, and a delicate hand was raised to disengage it, but I saw no more. I had half a mind to make my horse stumble and throw me, so great was my desire to see this hidden nymph. For my excuse, I must state that I had just risen from a sick bed among strangers, and that I had seen no woman's face for a month, save my old nurse's—which was rather the worse for the wear and tear of seventy years—for two long and dreary months; that E—— was not famous for pretty faces, if I could judge by those I had met in my rides; and, lastly, that the house in question had proved a source of unsatisfied curiosity to many persons. No one had been able to unravel the mystery; but as it was the abode of silence and order, so far as could be judged, no one had a right to invade it.

For two or three mornings I had seriously meditated endangering myself in some way near the house, in order to make the inhabitants come out to me. Perhaps this confession will induce some to think that my late illness had weakened my mind as well as my body. Let that pass; perhaps it was so.

Fortune favored me. A soaking, drenching shower drove me to the door of that very house, it being the only one within half a mile either

way. I knocked, and stood several minutes in my dripping garments, before the door opened. A pretty mulatto boy, evidently from his white linen apron and jacket a servant, conducted me to a large dining-room where there was a fire. He helped me off with my wet coat, gave me a large shawl to wrap about me, and then went in quest of his master, as he said.

When he returned to the room, he was followed by a gentleman who begged me to accept dry clothes, remarking that he had seen me ride by every day and thought me an invalid. I cannot describe the strange power which this man had over me. It was a species of fascination, such as I had never known before. I seemed to dwarf in stature and in intellect before him. My sense of self-importance, usually of a fair proportion, sunk to one of painful inferiority. This, of course, was after a time in which we had conversed on various subjects, in all of which he showed himself master. It was not that he assumed anything, for he was singularly deferential in manner and unpretending in style. It seemed as if he always sought the simplest words in the language to express his ideas. Perhaps it was the very plainness of the good old Saxon words, so unfrequently heard in this age of exaggerated expression, that impressed me so powerfully.

Then the bodily presence of so large and grand a form, such a noble air and such lofty height, was irresistible. His face, too, was cast in a mould of marvellous beauty. The large brown eyes, the wealth of dark, curling locks in which there was the least possible shading of silver gray, the thickly arched brows, with a forehead not high but wide, a mouth exquisitely sweet in expression, and teeth that it would be invidious to compare to pearls or lilies, for they were whiter than either; think of all these and you have my stranger quite as perfectly as I can describe him.

Here I had been longing to meet the beautiful woman whom I imagined inhabited this lonely place, and I found myself fairly conquered by admiration of a man! I could not help laughing at the ridiculous idea. It was brightening up in the west, and the sky was beginning to promise a glorious evening. The servant had brought in my clothes, dried and beautifully pressed, and my hat restored by a mysterious process, to its original shape; but my entertainer begged me so cordially to remain, that I could not resist. Besides, my long-cherished curiosity might be now gratified, and as I looked forth from the window, where my host pointed out the still running streams in the road, and bade me wait, at least until they had disappeared,

I felt unequal to the sacrifice of leaving him.—We had left the dining-room for a parlor, the elegance of which accorded strangely with the unpainted structure that contained it. There were splendid sofas, rich in material and design, though plain in color; mirrors, the size of which was of more account than the gilding of the frames, and pictures, whose value I could only dimly guess at.

While changing my apparel, I had been conducted to a superbly-furnished bedroom on the ground floor, and thither I now returned to resume my own. It had been supplied with hot water and all the appliances of an elaborate toilet. There were books everywhere—in cases, lying on tables and piled even on the floor, as if just unpacked.

When I returned to the parlor, I was introduced to a lady, who had entered during my absence. Unfortunately, I could not tell by the introduction, whether she was the wife of my host or not. Dim as the room had become, I could see that she was beautiful. Her age could not be guessed at even. She spoke but little, but her words and manner were gracious, and I was determined to pursue the advantage I had gained.

A week passed, in which I each day rode by the house. How I longed to call, yet I did signal violence to my wishes. Once or twice I saw that graceful figure bending over a rose bush, the only sign of cultivation in the deserted ground, and once she bowed her head in answer to my eager salute. But, at the end of the week, I was rewarded for my patience. "Gerald" (the only name upon the card which had been handed me on the night of the shower) came out and urged me to alight. I was only too happy to do so. Again all that was graceful and winning in conversation, or interesting in the works of art visible, was brought forward for my entertainment, while fruits and wine of rare quality were pressed upon me after my ride.

"Leonora," Gerald called the lady, and I will thus speak of her. I could not divine in what relation she stood to him, so I knew not what to call her; and Gerald might have been his baptismal name, or it might have been his surname. It was long before I discovered, although of course I addressed him as Mr. Gerald.

The ice once broken, I had no hesitation in calling. My welcome was sure, and certainly it was warm and unaffected. That I was giving the first love of a youthful heart to the beautiful stranger, could not be denied. It remained to be proved whether I had a right to bestow or she to receive it. She sang to me, and the notes which

she drew from a fine parlor organ were the perfection of scientific taste. I was bewildered, enchanted; yet how did I know on what dangerous ground I might be walking? Foolishly enough, I never asked a question that might have given me all the knowledge I needed. It was the fear of dissipating the bright vision that I had taken to my soul, that kept me from so doing.

On coming out from the house one day I was met by a friend, who, after some faint indications of attempting to pass me with only a bow, stopped suddenly short, and asked me if I was in the habit of visiting that house very often. For a moment I was too angry to reply.

"It is no use, Ward," he said, "I shall feel bound to tell you what I have heard, even at the risk of your displeasure. They tell sad tales of the inmates of the house yonder. The man who has no name, it seems, or never gives one, is reputed as a murderer, and the young woman is implicated with him, the murdered person being her own father."

This was a terrible tale to hear. How did I know that it was not true? Was I to let my newborn love blind me to what these people might be? I had nothing to offer, except the deep impression in my own heart of their goodness and innocence, but of course it would not convince any one else; so I bit my lip and was silent. He went on with the most exaggerated details. His tale, if true, involved the most diabolical cunning, the most hideous malice, the most reckless disregard of all ties, moral, social and domestic, on their part.

It was sickening, but I did not believe a single word of the heartless and distorted narration. Gerald and Leonora were no such beings, I knew, as were represented; yet how could my simple belief prevent others from crediting the monstrous tale?

I had once heard Gerald inadvertently speak of a small town in western New York, as having once been his residence, the one that bears the name of DeKalb. I say involuntarily, for he recalled his words and colored painfully. I had a friend there, and I resolved, through him, to find out all I could. Writing would not do. I must see him, and I undertook the journey on pretence of my health.

I called to bid them farewell for a short time, without naming my destination. That night I was convinced that Leonora was not the wife of Gerald, whatever was the connection between them. I trembled to think what that other might be. I thought Leonora's voice grew husky when she said good-by, and I am sure there were tears in Gerald's eyes. I know that I brushed away a

suspicious sort of mist from my own, as I turned sadly and thoughtfully away. If my journey lent a color to one of the many disgraceful things I had heard, I knew that the door out of which I had just passed, would never again open to me. I had staked more than I had believed, upon this new hope, this wild dream, as some might call it, and I could not think otherwise than painfully upon its overthrow.

Well, I arrived at DeKalb, and had to submit to the painful contretemps of finding my friend absent. Surely, I thought, fate is very unkind to a poor invalid. Twenty miles further on, I travelled in pursuit of him; but he was like the mirage of the desert, and eluded me again and again. Finally I sat down at a little town through which he must pass on his return, waiting to intercept him, and here I met him a fortnight later. What a night we had! Four o'clock struck, and found us still by the blazing fire, while he related a tale that made my heart thrill with alternate pity and love.

Gerald Forrester, in the days of his youth, was married to Edith Montgamier. Joy and happiness were theirs for a brief year. Edith's father and sister were residing with her, and all was calm and serene as a summer morning. At the end of that time Edith appeared changed. I must be brief in describing this change and its effects. In one of her strange moods of unwonted passion, she took her father's life. Gerald was proud, and he vowed never to submit to the humiliation of seeing his wife tried for murder, even though he knew that she would be cleared on the plea of insanity. So, without further delay, the moment the funeral was over, he took her away to this desolate spot, leaving Leonora, who was like a pitying angel to her sister, to make all arrangements for joining her. My friend declared that if Gerald were to take her home now, no one would ever trouble him; but on Edith's own account it was probably better to be away from the scene of such a tragedy. He described the excitement caused by the death of Mr. Montgarnier—a man universally loved and deplored. And he also said that there were some who did not believe Edith insane.

Io jubilate! Gerald and Leonora were not to blame for the freaks of madness or mad temper! And for what else did I care? Nothing, at that moment, certainly.

So I turned my way homeward with a light heart. With what a welcoming smile she met me, the darling! A smile that is renewed every time I enter my own door, for Leonora Montgarnier is now my wife. Edith is dead—gone where an earthly judge would be powerless to her for good or evil. Over her grave Gerald wept his last sad tears, and then the waves bore him on to a foreign shore. Only recently he has returned to awaken the remembrances of twenty years ago, of which only he knows the full bitterness; only he can know the relief that death sometimes brings to tried and weary souls, even when it comes to our dearest ones.

[ORIGINAL.]

THE SHIPWRECK.

BY A FOREMAST HAND.

ONE of those rare old houses—the relics of the seventeenth century, whose quaint carving and fantastic ornaments attract antiquarian tastes, and the decay of which makes us sigh when we look upon them as the last memorials of a bygone age, was a few years ago the scene of a gathering of a large circle of young and middle-aged persons. They were the descendants of the first owners of the old house; for it was one of the few mansions that do not pass out of the original family. There was Harry Broadhurst and his wife and children—Kate Broadhurst, who married into the equally ancient family of Middletons, and was the mother of brave sons and fair daughters—and then came a mingling of bachelor uncles, maiden aunts, widows and widows' children, second cousins, and others whose relationship was bewildering to a stranger, but which all seemed easy enough to the family group to unravel.

The house stood on a pleasant slope leading to the sea; its broad sweep of terraces almost touching the sands, and its trees scattering their fruit along the beach whenever the winds held high festivals among the branches. The fine forests behind the house made solemn music at these festivals of the storm king, while the waves supplied the heavy undertone. But on a fair day, when Nature put on her smiles and dimples, there was no lovelier spot than Broadhurst—no sweeter music than the murmuring of waves at its foot, or the soft sighing of the summer breeze among the tree tops.

For the most of the year, the mansion was the abode only of Harry Broadhurst's immediate family; but in summer and a part of the autumn, it was peopled by the numerous relations who claimed it as their trysting place. At the time I speak of, Percy Broadhurst, the eldest son of the resident family, and a young son of his deceased brother, a mere boy, were both at sea in the same vessel, and daily expected from a long voyage. The mother of young Arthur Broadhurst, a young widow of thirty, was among the guests, awaiting the arrival of her boy whom she had reluctantly allowed to make his first voyage with her nephew Percy, who now bore the rank of captain.

Morning after morning Helen Broadhurst took her station upon an eminence where her brother-in-law had placed a fine telescope, and hour af-

ter hour she swept the broad bay by its help, vainly imagining every sail that hove in sight was bringing her absent child. Arthur Broadhurst was a boy of whom any mother might have been proud. He was nearly fourteen, tall and stout of his age, handsome as a picture, brave and true-hearted, and passionately devoted to his young and beautiful mother. For Arthur's sake she had resisted the persuasions of Henry Middleton to become his wife, and resolved to devote herself wholly to her son's welfare.

They had been expected in August, and it was now nearing the last of September. Already the autumn gales were growing high, and the equinoctial threatened its yearly fury. The moon was near its full, but it was obscured by fleecy clouds that scudded athwart the sky with a rapidity that betokened a coming tempest. Helen's heart sunk within her, for well she knew the signs so plainly discernible upon the sea coast before a storm.

She had stationed herself at her window overlooking the sea, ever since dinner, and now it was evening. In vain had she been summoned to tea. A dreadful presentiment of danger or distress filled her soul. As the wind howled and roared in the wide old chimneys, she shuddered. Fanny Middleton came in and besought her to go down.

"I cannot, Fanny," she answered. "I shall never go again until I know something of my child."

"Helen, how perfectly absurd! I thought you were a wise woman. I will go and tell Henry never to quote you to me as a pattern of wisdom again."

"Hush, Fanny. I am certain that something is happening even now. My impression is as vivid as if it were really passing before me, that the ship is in danger. I have sat here and dreamed that it was dashed upon the shore yonder. I have seen my Arthur's pale face wet with the salt brine and lying among the sea-weeds; and Percy struggling with the waves, unable to save himself or my boy. O, Fanny, I may live to see that dream realized."

"Helen! are you a Christian, and dare you thus distrust God's goodness? Come down among the lights and cheerful faces below, and give way no longer to these dreamy fancies."

Reluctantly was Helen dragged away from her secluded room; but once in the parlor, she gave way to the brilliant cheerfulness of the party, and was herself again. Henry Middleton thought that the pure, pale face was lovelier that night than ever, and he hovered around the circle of which Helen was the centre.

Some one proposed dancing. Helen refused to join in the amusement further than to play for the others; and Henry led her to the instrument, standing beside her while she played, unheeding the bright eyes of two or three lovely girls who would have been proud to dance with one so distinguished looking.

In the pauses of the dance, the gaiety was so loud that no one heard the rising of the storm. Percy's father and mother had been delighted spectators of the mirth going forward, and now begged for some music of a different kind. What impelled Helen no one knew, but she resumed her seat at the piano, ran her fingers over the keys in a lively strain, played a popular melody in a dashing style, and sank, all at once, into the heart-breaking notes of the Dead March.

Wild and thrilling were the sounds she produced, as if the deepest and most solemn emotions of the composer were understood and expressed in her playing. It sent a thrill through the circle. Henry bent forward to beseech her to cease the mournful music, when he saw to his horror and surprise, that he was talking to one in a trance. Her eyes were open, but there was no expression there—only the dull, stony gaze of eyes that see not. Mechanically the fingers played on; and soon the whole company noticed that something strange was going forward. Henry Middleton's shocked and troubled look gave the first intimation. Several ladies rushed towards her with smelling-bottles and fans, but Henry waved them away. He felt that it was dangerous to arouse her suddenly from the somnambulism state into which she had fallen. She did not move, except that her fingers still played on that dreary, mournful strain. At last she ceased and fell forward. Then Henry took her in his arms and laid her upon a sofa. The strange look passed from her face, and she appeared to sink into a soft, natural sleep.

There were not many minutes to watch her. The profound stillness which each one kept in the room enabled them to hear the awful tumult of the still rising storm; and just then, the man employed about the garden appeared at the door with a face full of horror, and whispered to Mr. Broadhurst that guns were heard, and that a ship was near, evidently in distress. Henry Middleton caught the sound and rushed from the house, where he was soon joined by every man and boy in the family. Percy and Arthur were in the minds of all.

And there was the wreck, her sails rent, her spars split to the deck, as was plainly seen by the vivid flashes of lightning that threw momentary brightness over the scene. So near that

they could see the upturned faces of the men on board; and yet—O, despair! they knew that earthly aid could not reach them. There were men upon the beach who had followed the sea for a livelihood for years; there were boats in profusion—but who could risk life in that boiling sea? The waves, dashing white and high, hid the sight, save at intervals, from the shore; but each glimpse showed them in greater and increased danger. There was no resource but to look on and watch the terrible scene.

Every dash of the waves brought the helpless wreck nearer the shore—nearer—still nearer. And now, all hope was centered in one thought—that perhaps she would not part until she was near enough for the people to swim to the shore. That hope was quenched, for when she was again revealed to sight, she was parted amidships and seemed fast sinking, while they on the beach stood powerless and despairing.

A moment more, and they caught sight of the men struggling in the waves, and one dead body was thrown by the mighty tenth wave, to their feet. It was that of a strong, powerfully built man, and the sailors around recognized it as one who had sailed with Percy Broadhurst! This then was the good ship that went off with flying colors one year ago, bearing within her bosom brave and young hearts, now doomed perhaps to a frightful death. Another and another dead form, bruised and torn by the wild billows, floated onward to the shore. Two or three sank within sight of home. Henry Middleton turned away his eyes, unable to bear it longer. It might have been perhaps Percy, or Arthur, dear boy, who thus disappeared, and he could look no more.

As he turned his gaze to the rocks he had passed on his passage to the beach, a flash of red lightning blazed strongly upon a slight, dark figure, stealing slowly over their broken and jagged surface. It was too tall for a boy—too slender for a man. He could not help watching it under the next flash. Good heavens! could that be Helen wandering out in this wild night? He had seen a pale face and two white hands, wet with the driving spray. She came on, slowly, steadily, never slipping nor struggling, but smoothly as if she were treading the level beach. He dared not go to her, for he knew she must still be in that awful sleep. He remembered to have heard that a somnambulist rarely or ever received injury in circumstances of danger, and was comforted by the thought. Onward she came, passed him, and went close to the water's edge. He followed her closely, but neither touched her nor spoke.

She knelt down, and just at that moment, a form floated towards her. The white hands were around it in an instant, the lips were pressed on the pale forehead, and "Arthur, dear Arthur!" was uttered by the hitherto silent lips. Henry made a sign to two or three stout sailors, and mother and son were soon borne to the nearest hut, while another was despatched to the house for restoratives. In an hour, during which hope and fear alternated equally in Henry's bosom, they both opened the eyes closed so long; both weak and unable to speak, but alive and apparently conscious.

The door opened softly, and a hand was laid on Henry's shoulder. He turned, and beheld Percy Broadhurst! Alive, strong and handsome as ever, with only a dash of melancholy in his face when thinking of the five brave fellows who had met their fate, he stood there like a young sea king, dripping with water and stripped to the waist, but anxious only for poor little Arthur, who could not as yet return the pressure of his hand.

A bright October morning. The sea was blue and serene as the sky mirrored above its surface. Two handsome travelling carriages stood at the door of the mansion house, and Henry Middleton and Helen who now bore his name, were in one, and Arthur, Percy, and a lovely girl, who claimed Henry as her brother, were by the side of the other.

"What do you think of dreams now, Helen?" asked the merry voice of Fanny Middleton, as she took her place in the carriage.

"Hush, dear," whispered Percy. "Let us forget all the horrors of that night, and enjoy only this beautiful season."

The lively girl put up her red, pouting lip, and said:

"Take care, Percy! Remember that your bargain was that I should say and do just as I please!"

And then and there, under the glowing crimson of the maple trees that arched

above their heads, he renewed the contract upon those lips— and kept it too!

HER COUSIN JOHN.

A TRUTHFUL COMEDY FROM REAL LIFE.

By JAMES F. FITZGERALD.

It was somewhere in the vicinity of the latter part of September, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and fifty-seven—and although the exact date is not given, the reader may be assured that it was so late in the month indicated, that the nights were slightly spiced with frost, and the early mornings disagreeably chilly—it was then, at this particular time, and just on the verge of the cold, gray dawn of one of the aforesaid mornings, that a solitary individual “might have been seen” disconsolately perambulating the deserted streets of the city of Rochester, in the State of New York.

Not only might have been, but was actually seen, by a number of early passers-by milkmen, by charcoal peddlers, by newspaper carriers, and other early risers by compulsion—all of whom casually observed that he was a tall and pensive young man of twenty-three or four, somewhat pale, and apparently in a melancholy frame of mind, and habited in a shabby suit of black, the knees and elbows of which were in that threadbare condition which betokens a revolt. Shivering in the cool morning air, as he wended his way slowly along the deserted thoroughfare, with his eyes fixed upon the pavement, and his hands bestowed in his pockets, he delivered himself of a soliloquy, which, as might be anticipated, related to his own present condition; and which is necessarily presented, in this connection as throwing some light upon the previous history of our hero; for in this individual, we are to recognize a veritable one of that species.

“Now, John Jones’ he began, evidently addressing his remarks to himself, inasmuch as there was no one-else within hearing, “now, John Jones, a pretty mess you have cooked for yourself, haven’t you? No? We’ll see about that, since you deny it. You arrived in this city, where you haven’t a single friend or

acquaintance, last night, about seven o'clock. You hadn't so much as a copper about you then, and your finances have experienced not the slightest increase since. If there had been a bed for you to have occupied, you would have gone to it supperless; but as there was none you have spent the night in street-walkings. No supper last night, no prospect of breakfast this morning, and you are as hungry as a bear. Heigho, what do you propose to do in the premises? John Jones, it is my solemn persuasion that you should never have been born."

Heaving a deep sigh at the conclusion of this serio-comic soliloquy, the speaker pursued his walk, apparently with no fixed purpose or destination. And it was while he was thus sauntering along, with his eyes still bent on the pavement, and his hands crossed carelessly behind him, that he was almost overthrown by the shock of a sudden collision with a short, portly man

who carried a well-filled market basket on his arm.

"Deuce take it, sir, why do you run against me?" the latter rather peevishly exclaimed, stopping to recover the breath which had been summarily ejected from his body.

He was about to say more, when, as the other party raised his head, and afforded a full view of his face, with its regular, strongly marked, and withal rather handsome features, he bent eagerly forward to examine them more closely, laying his hand somewhat firmly on the young man's shoulder, as if to detain him, who, for his part, stood mute and passive, submitting with the utmost patience to the detention and inspection.

"Well, what now?" was his mental query. "This fat citizen of this most inhospitable city probably means to prefer a charge of assault and battery against me, give me in charge of a policeman, take me to the station-house, to the magistrate. People *versus* Jones, convicted, fined, imprisoned, and other delightful little realities. Well, well, commit yourself to fate, John, you've shifted for yourself long enough, and to no purpose. But the keeper of my destiny opens his mouth. He is about to speak. He seems puzzled."

"John?" the portly person interrogated, somewhat doubtfully.

"You've hit the name exactly, sir," was the reply.

"John Jones?"

"Right again, sir; I am that individual."

The market-basket quickly dropped to the pavement, and seizing the young man's hand, the fat gentleman wrung it so violently as to crack the knuckles of the same, with a report like a volley of pistol shots.

"My dear John, I'm overjoyed to see you. We've been expecting you for the last week, and wondering why you didn't arrive. Mrs. Gray and Clara will be overjoyed to see you, as well as myself. When did you reach the city?"

The young man could hardly overcome his astonishment sufficiently to allow him to answer.

"Last night? And slept without seeing us? Too bad, too bad! How did you leave your father?"

"He's dead, sir!" And a tear accompanied the words.

"Dead? Bless my soul, is it possible? When did it happen?"

"Almost a month ago."

"Shocking! That, then, was what detained you. I sympathize with you, my dear boy, in your sad bereavement. I do, indeed. Sad, inexpressibly sad, to think of. Poor John, I loved

him better than any of my other cousins, before he moved to the West, and felt almost like a brother to him. Well, well, we can't bring him back by grieving, and you will be doubly dear to us now. Come in, my boy; here's the house, right here! Clara will be delighted to meet you at last. You've been thinking a little of her, lately, eh, John?"

Now it cannot be denied that this person, John Jones, was considerably surprised by the remarkable turn which things had taken within the preceding minute; but being a person of very ready address, and almost unbounded confidence in his own powers to get himself out of any little difficulty into which his assent to the invitation of the fat gentleman might lead him, he coolly suppressed every manifestation of astonishment, and resolved to abandon himself to the fate he had invoked. To be sure, it was as clear as daylight that he had been mistaken for some third person; but then, censorious reader, imagine yourself placed in the situation in which his soliloquy discloses him, imagine, too, the strong temptation to let the adventure take its course, which naturally beset him, and then candidly confess, that, under similar circumstances, you might have acted very much as he did. However, in reply to the last question, he answered very readily that Clara had been in his thoughts incessantly, of late, and that he was literally dying to see her.

"Aha, sly rogue, father's own boy!" And the old gentleman accompanied the suggestive remarks by sundry pokes in the waistband. "But here's the house, as I said; come right in, breakfast is waiting."

The speaker caught up his basket in one hand, and with the other seized the person addressed by the arm, and hurried him up the stone steps of a stylish-looking brick house, in front of which the meeting of the two had occurred. Nothing loth, the young man suffered himself to be conducted into the hall, when a sudden thought of the shabbiness of his wardrobe, in connection with that other thought of the Clara who had been just represented as so anxious to see him, caused him to hesitate.

"Now, then, what's the matter?" his conductor impatiently observed. "Why don't you come along?"

"The fact is, my dear Cousin Gray," he replied, summoning his energies for a desperate revelation, "and if I must confess it, I hardly look presentable. You see that this suit is exceedingly threadbare, and more than this, it is my only one. But it would be very painful for me to explain—"

"Then don't think of explaining, my boy; I believe I understand you. Father died poor, perhaps, and—nay, don't say a word, but come with me, and I'll rig you out so you'll hardly know yourself. Fie, man, away with your scruples! What's the use of having wealthy cousins, if you're not to be at liberty to use them occasionally? And didn't your poor father pick me out of the gutter, thirty years ago, and make me all that I am now, and am I to be told that I am not to befriend his only son, and be a father to him in his extremity? Come, you young rascal, you are in my house, now, and are to obey orders."

The energy with which these words were spoken, accompanied by tears, as they were, as he alluded to John Jones, senior, left no alternative but submission, and John Jones, junior, therefore, permitted himself to be led up the stairs, and into a chamber, from which, in the course of half an hour he emerged, looking for all the world like a new mortal. Soap, water and towels had removed the effects of his uncomfortable night's vigil from his person; his brown hair was precisely brushed and adjusted; a fashionably cut suit gave him an air of refined and gentlemanly elegance, nor were the advantages of clean linen overlooked; and, altogether, he was firmly persuaded that he had never in his life looked or felt, saving his overpowering hunger, quite as well. The prediction of Mr. Gray was realized; he hardly knew himself, in the face and figure revealed by the glass.

These preliminaries satisfactorily disposed of, Mr. Gray introduced his protege into the breakfast room, where the table was waiting, and presented him, most gleefully, to the two ladies sitting in it—his wife and daughter. The former was a pleasant, matronly old lady, quite as fat as her husband, and as she threw her arms around his neck, and kissed him, John felt really quite overpowered. But he returned the salute, most dutifully, and then gave his attention to the other, the daughter Clara, a slender young girl, with the sweetest smile and the deepest, tenderest blue eyes imaginable. She came forward and offered her hand; he, bewildered as he was by her unexpected loveliness, took and retained it. She murmured the words, "Cousin John;" he said, as awkwardly as could be, and because he could think of nothing else to say, "Cousin Clara." And lastly, he did what he would never have dreamed of doing, had she not placed her lips in such tempting proximity to his—kissed her. The young lady colored a little, it must be admitted, but did not appear particularly displeased, while her father indulged himself in

another sly insertion of his forefinger in the young man's ribs.

Breakfast followed, during the course of which good Mrs. Gray more than once expressed her profound pleasure "to see the dear boy eat so!" The "dear boy," however, was only remunerating himself for his protracted fast, and this being done, he zealously devoted himself to the business of making a pleasant impression upon his new and strangely-made acquaintances. In this, he succeeded beyond his expectations; the old people listened with delight to his fluent and intelligent conversation, which truly indicated an educated mind, and an unusual refinement, and he was gratified to see that Miss Clara regarded him with marked interest.

But to describe in detail the events of the succeeding three months, would be an impossibility. The house where our hero found himself so acceptably domiciled, continued to be his home, and, indeed, Mr. Gray had more than once assured him that "as soon as that little family matter between himself and Clara was settled, he intended to take him regularly into business with him, and that his home should be with him always." They were three months which slipped by as swiftly as a pleasant dream; and save when it was marred by the fear that the person for whom he had been mistaken, the other John Jones, might make his appearance at any moment, and so expose his own passive imposture, save at such times, they were three most delightful months. With nothing to call him from the society of Clara, but rather with every facility for the enjoyment of it thrown in his way, by the parents, who grew more affectionate towards him daily, John suffered himself to be hurried to that point which his situation rendered inevitable from the first. In four words, three weeks had not elapsed since his entry into the house, before he was forced to confess himself in love, hopelessly in love, with Clara Gray, and when he came to confess it to her, he discovered that she was in much the same predicament, merely substituting his name for hers. He had thought at first that "Cousin John" sounded wonderfully sweet when spoken by her lips; but when he first heard her say "dear John," he was perfectly satisfied with the change.

But to do perfect justice to the hero of this truthful sketch, the novel position in which he now found himself was one into which he had been irresistibly led, as if by superior force. He had yielded to the pleasures of his new home, in tacit deception, with the recklessness of one in misfortune; but from the first moment of his intimacy with Clara, he had formed the resolu-

tion never to carry this deception so far as to take advantage of it to become her husband. Yet before the persuasion of his love for her, the resolve grew daily weaker and more futile; it was dissipated by the next touch of her hand and glance of her eye. It was very well and proper for him to make such a resolution; but it was also very natural for him to forget and renounce it, with Clara Gray leaning on his arm, as they strolled together in the moonlight evening. Unerring symptoms of this character were noticed by Mr. Gray with a chuckle of satisfaction, and by Mrs. Gray with a quiet and meaning smile, which betokened their perfect satisfaction with the course of events. In short, this young man with the unromantic name, found himself in a most romantic and perplexing predicament. What should he do? Give up Clara, acknowledge himself an arrant impostor, and cast himself again on the world? He shrank from such a course; his love protested overwhelmingly against it. What then? Continue to drift with the current of fate, and trust to love to preserve him? This was the course which he finally resolved upon. Hoping that his namesake, whose enviable position he was so acceptably occupying, might continue to remain in obscurity, he presented himself before Mr. Gray, and made the following announcement:

"I'm ready, cousin."

"Ready for what, John?"

"To marry Clara, of course; what else should I want to do?"

"Nothing that would please me better, my boy. Marry her as soon as you and she please, and God bless you! It really makes me feel young again to think of it. Go and talk it over with her, and when it is all arranged, you and I will settle those little business affairs about which I spoke to you."

And so John talked with Clara, and Clara, like a dutiful girl, consulted her mother, and it was decided that they should be married in the house in just two weeks from that day. And, at the appointed time, married they were, Clara looking lovelier than ever, and the bridegroom mentally accusing himself of all kinds of crimes and villainies; in fact, looking so sober as to draw upon him the pleasantries of his happy father-in-law. And just as the ceremony was concluded, and the parents were trying in vain to shed a few tears, as a kind of duty, upon the occasion, there came a furious ring of the door bell, and the servant ushered into the parlor a very homely man of about thirty years of age, who seemed to be laboring under an intense degree of excitement. Wiping his bald head with a most vividly-

colored bandana, and taking a huge pinch of snuff at every other sentence, he inquired, in very bland accents, of the head of the house:

"Be you called Peter Gray?"

"That is my name, sir; but it is usually spoken with a Mr. joined to it."

The worthy Mr. Gray spoke quite sharply, and seemed much irritated at the intrusion.

"And have you a darter by the name of Clary—and be this her—and has she been goin' and getting married to a man callin' hisself Jones—and be this he?" was the string of interrogations which followed, each uttered more vehemently than its predecessor.

"Yes, and what business is it to you? You will greatly oblige me, sir, by transacting your business with me, if you have any, as quickly as possible, and then taking yourself out of my house."

"I'll tell you what business it is!" and the stranger danced around the room, wiping his head frantically with the bandanna. "You've been swindled, sir, basely swindled and deceived! I'm John Jones, sir, the original and genuine John Jones, and if this young woman is your darter Clara, then I'm her Cousin John. Look here, sir, Peter Gray, sir, here be your letters to my father in regard to this young woman and John Jones, which is me, sir! That there individual is a rascal, a swindler, a—"

"Be careful, Mr. Jones," observed John Jones No. 1, "something unpleasant may happen to you, if you make use of such personal remarks!"

John Jones No. 2 moderated immediately.

"I don't understand this, Cousin John," Mr. Gray interposed, somewhat disturbed, turning to his son-in-law. "How did this fellow obtain possession of the letters which I wrote to your father, and what does he mean by his ridiculous assumption?"

"I will tell you all I know of this very singular affair, my dear Mr. Gray," the young man frankly replied. "It may be that I have acted very wrong in permitting you to continue deceived so long; but I have acted as I have from pure love for Clara, and I think I could not do otherwise, under the circumstances."

"Deceived! How? Explain yourself!" Mr. Gray ejaculated, in real distress. "Bless my soul, this is really getting serious! Are you not my cousin, John Jones?"

"No, that he been't," the bald-headed man interposed. "He's a villain—a—"

"Silence, sir, or I shall injure you!" John interrupted, frowning savagely at the speaker, who subsided again into silence. "My name is assuredly John Jones, as was my father's before

me; but as for being your cousin, I am compelled to disclaim it. I never knew what relatives my father had in this State, if any; his pride was so touched by the comparison of his poverty with the wealth which he formerly had, that he never corresponded with them, and left me totally ignorant of who or where they were."

"Strange—the strangest thing I ever heard of!" Mr. Gray cried, energetically slapping his knee. "I thought I recognized you by your face; I could swear, from your resemblance to him, you are the son of my cousin, John Jones."

"It is very singular, for there was also a remarkable similarity between the faces of my father and myself."

"Ah, I am beginning to see through it," Mr. Gray exclaimed, his face suddenly brightening up. "Where did your father reside?"

"In Chicago."

"And yours?" addressing him of the bald head.

"In Detroit, State of Michigan."

"And neither you nor your father, John, ever received any letters from me, nor wrote me any?"

"Never, sir, to my positive knowledge. I never knew of your existence before the morning on which you met me in the street. The death of my father left me penniless and destitute, and I came here in search of employment."

"Then it is all explained," Mr. Gray almost screamed, rushing upon the bewildered youth, tearing him from his bride, and hugging him as if mad. "Thank Heaven, my boy, you are my cousin, and Clara's Cousin John, and so was your father. The simple explanation of the whole enigma, is, that I had two cousins by that name, one the son of my maternal uncle, and as noble a man as ever breathed, your father, John; and the other, the son of my father's half brother, a perfect pest to the family, and the father of this individual with the bald head and handkerchief. Oddly enough, his name was also John Jones, and to complicate the matter more hopelessly, it seems that both the sons of these two cousins were named after their respective fathers, so that each bears the name of John Jones. You, John, here with Clara, are the very person whom I wished to be my son-in-law; but it seems that the letters which I addressed to your father on the subject, fell into the hands of the scapegrace cousin who has the honor of being the parent of yonder intelligent specimen of humanity. Our correspondence settled all the preliminaries, and that when the infernal rascal must have known he was reading and answering another man's letters. It was arranged that John Jones, the son, should make us a visit in the latter part of September—"

"But I couldn't come then," John Jones No. 2 loudly protested. "I was sick with—"

"Well, well, I am very well pleased that you stayed away. All I have to say now is, that everything has happened just as I could have wished, although about as curiously as if the fates were playing tricks with us. The merest accident brought you to my house, my dear John, with the happy result which this day has witnessed, and I shall always thank Heaven for the accident!"

"And so we've been frightened almost out of our senses for nothing," Mrs. Gray observed, with a sigh of relief.

"I breathe considerably freer myself," John said, drawing a long breath with the words. "You see, my dear Clara, just how naughty I have been, for I suppose it was very culpable to permit you to believe me your Cousin John, when I sincerely believed that I was no such thing. But it was all for you, my dear little wife; so just recall that line of 'Auld Robin Gray' which you were singing to me the other night, and forgive the deception."

"For who could withstand temptation, when hoping to win thee?"

Clara smiled through her tears, and laid her cheek against her husband's shoulder. It is to be presumed that her forgiveness was not unreasonably withheld.

"Well," John Jones No. 2 suddenly vociferated, emerging from the obscurity of the corner, "and what's all this ere to me? Supposin' his name be the same as mine, do that undo all the mischief? You, Mr. Peter Gray, I demand instant redress for my injuries."

"I'm very sorry for you, sir," Mr. Gray complacently observed, "but I don't clearly see how I can help you. I hold most firmly to the opinion that your father is as great a rascal as ever, and that he has attempted to make a catspaw of you in this affair. I think you had better return to Michigan, and tell him so."

"It's a swindle, an infamous cheat!" Jones No. 2 wrathfully yelled, stamping around like a crazy man. "I'll have 'em divorced. I'll sue you for false pretences. I'll—"

His demonstrations were only stopped by Mr. Gray's taking him by the ear, and gently ejecting him from the house.

"Plague take the fellow," he said, as he re-entered the parlor. "I thought one John Jones in the house was about enough. What do you say, Clara?"

Clara seemed to assent by placing her hands within her husband's, and smiling very sweetly in his face.

[ORIGINAL.]

THE TOMB AT DONANWORTH.

BY CARL WOLFFE.

THERE is, in the Church of the Holy Cross at Donanworth, a beautiful monument, erected to the memory of Mary of Brabant, the wife of Duke Lewis, whose character may be guessed at by the sobriquet universally given him—the severe. The fate of this young and delicate woman is one that might well arouse the sympathy of all who know the dreary tale.

Duke Lewis married this lovely and noble woman in the spring of 1254. His sister, the widow of the Emperor Conradin, was then living in Donanworth, with the little Conradin; and here, in the lonely castle with these two quiet and melancholy beings, he left his young bride, while he went away to the borders of the Rhine, to fight against the robber knights. Elizabeth, wrapped in her greater griefs, had little pity to spare for the bride. Nothing short of death awakened her to sympathy, and Mary, almost wild at the continued absence of her husband, resolved to write him a letter that should touch his heart, and bring him back to take her away from the dreary solitudes of Donanworth.

She knew that he was not now engaged in contest with the robbers of the Rhine. The good swords of the gallant knights had subdued them; and Duke Lewis and Henry, Count of Leinengen, whom Mary knew, were at Heidelberg, enjoying themselves, and she felt that amidst the engrossing pleasures that chained her husband there, she would be forgotten. A thought struck her. She would write to Count Henry, the playfellow of her early childhood, and ask him to induce Lewis to come home to her, or allow her to leave the solitude of Donanworth and join him at Heidelberg or elsewhere. A tender remembrance of her old companion prompted her to write to him in the same fond, coaxing way that she had used to him when, as a sprightly and spirited boy he had roamed with her, whom he called his little wife, in the shades of Brabant.

Her present loneliness, her strong desire for society more congenial to her habits than the tearful Elizabeth, all lent a warmth and color to her writing, so that one who did not know the friendly and affectionate relations that had existed between herself and Count Henry, might have easily imagined that her language was more impassioned than comported with the dignity of a woman already married to another. When she had thus poured out her feelings to

him whom she considered more as a dear brother than as a stranger—addressing him at the same time as “dear Henry,”—she commenced another letter to her husband. Unused to writing much, she had already exhausted herself in her first letter. Weariness and ennui overpowered her; and after vainly trying to restore herself to animation, she left the unfinished epistle and threw herself upon her couch. She slept heavily—dreamed of a duel between her husband and their mutual friend, and woke only when the empress came in and announced that she was about to send a messenger to Heidelberg. Slowly the young wife arose, and, half sleeping still, she took both letters, folded and sealed them, one with black, the other with white. Having done this, she saw the messenger of the empress and directed him to give the letters privately to each.

A cold, dreary day in Heidelberg had succeeded a night of high revel. The duke was lying upon his couch in his own apartment, trying to sleep off the effects of the too late hours. He was alone, Count Henry having an appointment which, spite of wind or weather he was bound to keep. He could not sleep; for troubled thoughts of the still well-beloved though forsaken Mary filled his mind.

“I am a traitor,” he said, “a traitor to the fair woman whom not two years ago I vowed to protect. What protection have I given her? I have immured her in a lonely castle that I should deem a prison, if I were obliged to remain in it an hour alone, or even with my weeping sister and her sad little boy. Yet I have left her there for more than a year, while I have been sipping sweets from every fountain of pleasure. My poor Mary! It shall be thus no longer. This very day, ere my resolution cools, and while I am sickening at the remembrance of last night, I will make preparations to go to her.”

He looked forth from the window without rising. The snow was mantling the earth in her heavy white robes. The winds were abroad and the fields and the moor beyond looked desolate and dreary. But the duke was now thoroughly bent on going. Not even for Count Henry’s return would he stay—but he wrote a hasty billet telling him that he was going to Donanworth, and ordered out the fleetest steeds in the stable.

His groom looked aghast. “My lord duke,” he remonstrated, “the weather is not fitting for man nor beast. Let me pray you to stay until the storm abates.”

“Hold thy peace!” he answered. “Find a strong, serviceable animal for thyself, and prepare to accompany me.”

The duke's charger and the groom's clumsier nag were brought out and stood side by side at the door. The master had enveloped his slight, youthful form in a fur overcoat, while the servant was wrapped in frieze to the chin. They had already mounted under the shelter of the broad-arched gateway, when a messenger rode up to them and delivered a letter to the duke. It was sealed with a black seal. His heart sank within him. Was Mary dead? A shudder, as of one dying, ran through his whole frame. He tore open the missive.

What was this? The handwriting of his wife, and directed outwardly to him; but within, words of doubtful meaning—words of soft, winning entreaty, and strong, cordial welcome to Donanworth. And all these addressed to Henry, Count of Leiningen—"dear Henry," as he was affectionately named therein. What madness was this? Had the powers of darkness reserved this terrible bolt to punish him for the very error of which he had just been so sorely repenting? For a moment he reeled in the saddle, then, concentrating all the mad passion of his fiery soul into one scorching, burning thought, he dashed wildly on.

Onward still onward, until the horse lay, covered with blood and foam, in the whitened road; the last breaths heaving his noble sides with agony. Two others shared the same fate, and still the fiery-hearted master went on, scarce staying for food or water. He scorned to recruit his frame or inflame his rage with wine. As he drew nearer and saw the light in her window, a thought of deep tenderness mingled with his passionate revenge, but did not sway that savage determination which had possessed him. All the house was dark, save for the light at her window. Approaching, he could see her figure. She was seated at a table, her head leaning on her hand. Of what or whom were her dreams? Of the husband whom she had vowed to love, or of Henry of Leiningen?

Around the drawbridge, the snow had fallen heavily. The wild storm had not abated and the duke rang the bell and blew the horn, until his steed shook and tottered with cold and fear. Elizabeth's old and valued servant came at last; the seneschal of the gloomy castle. Duke Lewis stayed not a moment. He hastily flung the old man aside, and ran to the chamber where he had seen Mary. She had started at the first sound of the bell; but she did not believe the stranger was her husband. Some poor, benighted traveller had perhaps tried their hospitality, and she hoped he would not seek it in vain upon this awful night.

Her door was opened, and a man whose garments were covered with snow, and with icicles hanging from his beard and a sword in his hand, entered. It could be no other than Lewis. She sprang up and threw her arms around the snow-clad form. With an indignant gesture, and a word of bitter meaning, he drove her from him. She shrieked out her anguish in one long, loud cry that woke the slumbering echoes of the castle, and penetrated to the ears of Elizabeth and her attendants. The latter cowered with fear—the empress sprang from her bed and stood within the chamber of Mary. Well she knew that despairing voice, but how little was she prepared for the scene within! Could this be the meeting between her brother and his wife, after their dreary separation? Alas! she knew, when she saw the confessor enter the room, that Mary was to be a victim. She knelt before her brother.

"Lewis, Lewis!" she cried. "For God's sake, for the sake of the holy mother of Jesus, tell me what madness possesses you!"

"This woman, Elizabeth, is a shame and reproach to your house. I came but to release you from the care I unwittingly burdened you with. Forgive me, sister, I thought her pure as this unsunned snow; but I know her now."

While she had been speaking, Duke Lewis had nodded to the confessor to do his office. Poor child! what had that innocent captive to repent of? Living her desolate life, she was powerless to sin deeply, and had nothing to be penitent for, save the wild anguish that his desertion awakened in her mind. She knew not what to say to her confessor. Everything seemed so strange to her. Meeting her husband thus after their long separation, without even the shadow of conscious blame upon her heart to reproach herself with, almost took away her life. She little knew that Duke Lewis came for that terrible purpose.

"Is there nothing more, my daughter?" asked the trembling priest. "Remember! your soul may this night be required of you."

"And if it is, holy father, I have no fear. Nothing can be more terrible than my husband's anger. God and the virgin will deal with my soul more tenderly. Lewis, I am innocent."

He took the crumpled letter from his vest.

"Here are the proofs, base woman! You and he shall both die!" And he struck at the long, flowing tresses that hung about her fair neck. In a moment that fair head lay bleeding, quivering at his feet. No one in the room believed that he would carry out his savage purpose. Elizabeth fainted, and the priest showered anathemas upon the guilty man, who, his passion

appeared at the sight of blood, had sunk into the chair so recently occupied by her who lay at his feet.

Mary's papers lay scattered about the table before him. Upon them was written again and again, "Lewis, return!" "Beloved Lewis," and the various affectionate words and sentences that love dictates for the absent. O, God! was it all a dream, and were these words suggested by the loving heart he had just murdered? Yet how, O, how could this be? Had she not written the same to the Count of Leinengen?

He was alone—for the priest had gone to help Elizabeth's woman to restore her from that deathly swoon, and they had all left him with his victim. The long tresses still lay over his feet. He hastily opened the letter again, crushed and torn as it was, and read it. Before it was quite finished, he had sunk upon his knees beside his murdered wife, in a frenzy of passion that surpassed even the mad rage he had indulged before. It was all clear to him now. She had written to the count in a loving spirit, it was true—but only as an artless and inexperienced woman may write to the dear friend of her husband and herself—reminding him of their childish days, and earnestly entreating him to come home with Lewis. Was that wrong? Was that a thing to cause him to draw the heart's blood of the woman who loved him?

He saw how the mistake must have originated. He was sure that Mary must have written to him, for there were half copies of letters, which must have been the initial to an entire missive. In her haste, she had misdirected them. And yet—and yet! There she lay, in all her glorious prime—dead!

The night wore on. He lifted the pale form to the couch and placed the limbs straight. Upon his knees he watched, until the cold, gray, wintry morning appeared, before the servants dared to disturb him. Five days after, she was buried in the Church of the Holy Cross.

When the Empress Elizabeth came to look upon the sweet sister she had loved so well, she was startled to find an unknown watcher sitting by the low bier. It

was a gray-haired man who sat there with covered face, and the large round tears dropping through the closed fingers, and splashing down upon the marble face. He looked up wildly at her entrance, removing the hands that concealed his features. It was her brother, Duke Lewis! In a single night the black, beautiful hair, shining and glossy, was changed— blanched to silvery whiteness; and he scarce numbering a quarter of a century.

He shrank painfully from seeing Count Henry again; but the latter sent him the fatal letter, that he might know how dearly the murdered wife loved the husband who destroyed her. Penitence and tears made up the sum of Duke Lewis's after life. One fatal remembrance haunted him forever—his Mary's dying look—one thought never left him—" I loved and I destroyed her."

[ORIGINAL.]

THE MUTINY AT THE NORE.

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BY W. W. HALL.  
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Not the beautiful creations of Walter Scott, as embodied in his two heroines, Effie Deans and the Lady of the Lake, could have been more perfectly lovely than she whom we have chosen as the heroine of our simple story. Alice Maxwell, a fair Scottish girl, came from Aberdeen, somewhere about the year 1790, to visit some connections, in Exeter, England. The youth, beauty and grace of the young stranger brought around her a host of admirers. She was shy and modest; and when they praised the sweet red lips, the ivory neck, pearly teeth, and soft golden tresses, she turned away in evident displeasure.

There was one, however, who only *looked* his admiration; and him, of all that crowded to receive her smiles, did she favor. This was Richard Parker, a young lieutenant in the navy, a brave and resolute sailor, who had already distinguished himself in His British Majesty's ser-

vice, and who bade fair to mount the topmost round of naval promotion, if courageous deeds should be permitted to carve his way upward.

While his companions were trying to win the favor of the beautiful Alice by flattery and adulation, the young lieutenant honorably wooed and won her, with the full consent of the friends of both parties. A journey into Scotland gained him the approbation of her parents, and his own family were delighted at the prospect of their darling Richard marrying, hoping thereby to secure him from pursuing the fatigue and probable dangers of his profession. Indeed, this last consideration was the only stipulation required by Alice in return for her consent to immediate marriage. Richard gave up his commission, and directly commenced to engage in some mercantile speculations in Edinburgh, whither he soon carried his beautiful bride.

Never was union more apparently auspicious. Something of retrospective regret mingled with the otherwise perfect happiness of the bridegroom in giving up his favorite profession; but he yielded gracefully and uncomplainingly to what, under other circumstances, he might have deemed a hard requisition for a wife to make. Alice Maxwell he thought was amply worthy of even a deeper sacrifice than that. On her part, she was fully sensible of the sacrifice she had demanded, and she strove by every effort to lessen the regret which she knew her husband must feel. It was only, however, when she saw him bend above the cradle of the first-born darling, that she was able to conquer the fears that he might perhaps repent of yielding to her request.

Two years went on after the birth of this child, and another was added to bless the happy parents. Every moment spared from his business, was devoted by Richard to the family group at home; the little Richard and Alice sharing with their still beautiful mother his affectionate solicitude. All at once a cloud darkened over the mercantile world. One of those vicissitudes, that at intervals sweep away the hopes of long years of active toil, came on like a tempest. The house of Parker bent before the storm, and, finally, was crushed into atoms. Men looked on and saw that it was no fault of Richard Parker's, and they did him the justice to bear witness to his unblemished integrity.

The sufferings of Alice through this dark period were greater than those of her husband. She felt that had he not given up his profession for her sake, he would now have been out of the reach of this terrible calamity; and she saw how hard it is to experience the "curse of granted wishes." The storm had come—had overwhelm

ed them; and she had no shelter to offer her husband in return for that which he had made her. The little patrimony left by her parents, now dead, would have barely secured them a retreat; and even that had been sunken in the general wreck. One brother still remained, but to him Richard Parker was too proud to apply for assistance; and before Alice was aware to what a depth of misfortune he had fallen, he shocked her with the news that he had taken the king's bounty, and was going on board a tender at Leith, as a common sailor.

Distressed beyond measure, she set off instantly to Aberdeen. Robert, she knew, would furnish her with the funds necessary to hire two substitutes for her husband. She had not misjudged her brother. He too was shocked, that Richard—a gentleman and a scholar—one who had stood high in his professional and mercantile life, should be thus reduced. He gladly furnished Alice with the supply she needed, and she went back to Leith with a comparatively light heart. Poor Alice! as she approached Leith her eyes were constantly turning towards the spot where she had seen the tender at anchor. A mist was before her, and she could not see her in the spot where she expected she was lying.

"There she goes!" was the exclamation from an old gentleman who had been looking in the same direction.

"Goes!" she repeated. "What is going?"

"The tender that lay at anchor this morning. She has sailed for the Nore."

The people in the stage-coach wondered what there was in so common and uninteresting a piece of news that should make the young woman fall from her seat into the opened arms of the old gentleman opposite. He suspected, however, that there was a lover or a husband in the case, and was kindly and tenderly busying himself for her recovery. It was only for a moment that her insensibility lasted. The next instant she sat upright, thanked her kind neighbor, and became as rigid and tearless as if her only beloved were not sailing away from her loving embrace. She alighted at her desolate home, a little old house, to which they had removed from a splendid and beautiful one. A neighbor had kindly offered to take care of her children for the day; and the woman now met her with little Alice in her arms. The child's face was hot and flushed with fever. Alice caught it from her and burst into tears. Those tears saved her life.

Little Alice grew worse, and in a very few days the unhappy mother saw her carried away. Had it not been for her boy, she must have sunk beneath her sufferings. The little creature tried

to comfort her, and he succeeded. She felt that she had something yet to live for. She was not utterly lonely, though Alice's death and her husband's hopeless absence bore all too heavily upon her wounded spirit.

The beginning of May, 1797, saw Richard Parker at the Nore, where the tender joined the squadron. He was immediately drafted on board the *Sandwich*, which was the grand ship, and bore the flag of Admiral Buckner, the post admiral. Already the spirit of mutiny was rife in the squadron, and they who cherished it were only too glad to draw into their ranks one who was so superior in knowledge and intelligence, and whose experience in seamanship so great as Richard Parker's.

He became the very soul of the enterprise, the organ of all their wishes. Under his direction, they rose against their officers. To quote from the report, they put each vessel under the government of a committee of twelve men; each man-of-war appointed two delegates and each gun-boat one, to act for the common good.

Of these delegates, Richard Parker was unhappily chosen president and accepted the trust. A list of grievances was made out and demands were specified. If these were granted, the men were ready to return to duty. Everything was signed by Parker as president. Throughout the whole fleet he was styled "Admiral Parker," and neither he nor his followers ever forgot the dignity belonging to such a title. The officers against whom they had mutinied, were treated with the most marked respect, and everything was conducted with a regard to decorum and the etiquette required between any two parties negotiating a treaty.

Meantime, Parker had obstructed the trading vessels from a passage up or down the Thames, and merchantmen were placed under blockade, occupying the spaces between the men-of-war. From the latter streamed the red flag of insubordination. Meantime, the government remained firm in refusing all compromise with the mutineers; and they began to despair of ever making any headway against it. It was a brief struggle. On the sixteenth of June the mutiny ended; every ship having been restored to the command of its original officers. A party of soldiers went on board the flag ship, and to them the officers delivered up two who were considered the ring-leaders of the party, one of whom was Richard Parker.

A week later, the trial of him who was now only known as "Admiral Parker" commenced. He was brought from the black hole of Sheerness garrison and placed before a court martial.

The court sat on board the *Neptune* off Greenhithe, vice admiral Sir Thomas Paisley presiding. Parker's defence of himself was manly, rational and perfectly respectful; but he might as well have spoken to the wind. He was convicted of receiving honors due only to a chief, of passing from ship to ship, giving orders and usurping the title of admiral. Nothing could save him. He was condemned to death. His words on hearing his sentence were manly and noble. He declared his intentions to have been innocent, and expressed his hope in God, and also in the return of all the men to the service of their country. He was executed at the yard arm of the *Sandwich* under the yellow flag, and not a word or sound was heard from the men who were all assembled to see their "admiral" die. He was then immediately interred at the naval burying-ground at Sheerness.

Alice Parker and her boy were seated at their scanty meal, on the twenty-second of June. It was a fresh and lovely day, such as the month of roses only can bring—a day that seemed made for happiness. The boy was prattling of his father and of little dead Alice, whom the mother had long since ceased to regret. Death seemed so much happier for the dear child than the weary and wasting life, which she could not help feeling would have been her portion as well as her own.

A sad life indeed had poor Alice led since Richard left her. At times she feared that she should never see him again; and then anxiety for him and for her boy's future would cloud her mind, until she was nearly deprived of her reason. On this lovely June day, hope seemed once more transfused into her heart. She answered the child gaily and hopefully, and listened to his prattle with a lighter heart than she had known for many months.

An old Scotch pedler, who had stopped frequently upon his rounds to rest upon her doorstep, which he said was "unco clean" now seated himself there in the shade of a small tree, the only one that grew in the forlorn looking street, and which Alice had watered and trimmed until it had begun to flourish.

"Do you hear any news of the fleet?" she asked, for she had long ago told old Alick her story and begged him to bring her any tidings he might gather in his rounds.

"Ay!" was his prompt reply. "There hae bin a risin' among the min, and ane o' thim, a braw and cantie chiel, they say, is to dea to-morrow, for leadin' thim on."

"What is his name?" asked Alice, with a lip

and cheek so pale that the old *gaberlunzie* noticed it.

"Flout! I dinna speer the name. Ay, I hae it. A chap down bye said it. It wor Marker or Parker, an' ane o' thim. Hech, woman! it is a joe o' yer ain that ye glowr at the auld blue gown sae?"

Alice closed her eyes for a moment, but the deep pain that entered her heart kept her perhaps from fainting.

"My husband is there," she said, so quietly, that she was amazed at herself. Then she went softly into the bedroom and put other clothes upon herself and the child, gave all the food she had to the old man, locked her door, and went into the highway, to await the mail-coach going to London. It was just the hour. When she arrived, she heard that he had been tried, but the result was not known.

She resolved to petition the king for his pardon, and paid a guinea to an advocate to draw one up. Armed with this, she went to the palace. Here she waited in vain for permission to go into the king's presence. One of the lords in waiting asked her business, and she handed him her papers in silence. He returned them after glancing at the name.

"It is in vain, my poor woman," he said. "Had it been for any other than Richard Parker, your application for mercy might have been heeded. For him there can be none."

The cruel words, though not unkindly spoken, pierced the heart of the hapless Alice. She left the palace and took the coach for Rochester, where she heard that Parker was to be executed the next day. Folding her child to her bosom, she went down to the river side, hoping to hire a boat to take her on board the *Sandwich*. It was before daybreak, but crowds were astir, and every one was talking of the coming event. She called to a waterman. He shook his head at her movement.

"Nay, lass," he said, "I cannot go over for one passenger. The brave Admiral Parker is to die to-day, and I will get any sum I choose to ask for a boat full."

It was a comfort, at least, that her husband was not spoken of with contempt or execration. She felt after all that he was not going to die a dishonorable death. In her deepest misery, she thanked God for this. She succeeded at last in getting on board a market boat bound to Sheerness, but it was not allowed to go along side of the *Sandwich*. In despair she called on Parker's name, and entreated the boatmen to go nearer. Pitying her sufferings, and believing her to be the wife of him who was to die, they attempted

it, but were prevented by a sentinel who threatened to fire on them. Still she could see plainly on board the Sandwich, and now came the dreadful cries of her sufferings. She saw her husband appear on deck between two clergymen, and she cried out, "Pass the word for Richard Parker!" while she held up her boy in her arms towards him.

"Alice! Alice! my wife, my dear wife!" was the response from the deck of the Sandwich; while she who had so bravely kept up until this moment, fainted at the sound of that beloved voice. When she recovered all was over!

Living or dead, she must see Richard once more. Leading her child by the hand, she left the boat which had been rowed back, and sought the naval burying-ground in which she was told he had been buried, and from which he would probably be taken by the surgeons that night! The very thought was madness! So the poor distracted creature found the shallow grave in which Richard's body had been hastily buried, and actually, with her own fingers, scooped away the earth until the slight shell which had been thrown together for his remains appeared. Once more, then, she held that hand. Once more she parted the hair above the head which had so often lain upon her bosom. No one saw her but two women. Their compassion was awakened by her distress, and they accosted her.

"Help me, O, help me!" she cried, as she saw the pity deepen in their faces. "If you are wives, help me bear my husband from this place."

The women left her, and soon returned with several men. It was now night, and they succeeded in raising the body and placing it in a van just starting for Rochester, and from thence it was taken to London, the widow accompanying it, and paying six guineas for its transition. Hundreds of persons upon the road were talking of the fate of the brave Admiral Parker; but none dreamed of the sad freight in the wagon.

A tavern, on Tower Hill, was the only place she could procure, and she sat all the night after she arrived, with the dead body before her, in her room. Meantime, the news had reached London of the exhumation of the body, and a crowd were begging to see it. The lord mayor came to see what she intended to do with it, and promised that it should not be taken from her. It was finally, by his persuasion and advice carried to White Chapel Churchyard. An old, infirm woman, nearly blind, still haunts the churchyard, receiving from charity the means of supporting life. She speaks to herself constantly, and the burden of her words is "Richard! Richard!"

MABEL:

THE GIPSEY MOTHER.

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BY H. M. S.  
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MABEL, the gipsy mother, stood silent and abstracted in the leafy door of her rock dwelling! The day was fast declining, and the bright beams of the setting sun shot up among the fleecy clouds trooping through the sky, and shattering in the distance, drifted back again to earth, filling the atmosphere with an almost palpable halo of glory. A warm, misty haze swept over the landscape, and slumbered in the bosom of the forest, till the leaves that had all day long been whispering low and sweetly to each other, grew still and silent, as if subdued into a gentle sympathy with the all pervading loveliness of a summer sunset. It was an hour of strange, wild beauty; such an one as sends the warm blood surging up the heart like ocean waves—when all that is pure and holy in our nature is stirred into active life, and seems struggling within the soul for utterance and appreciation.

The brilliant coloring was gradually melting away into one of a more sombre cast. Shadows were deepening among the hills, and around the huge rocks, until they seemed to take palpable forms, and grow, and increase to gigantic forms; yet still the tall, erect figure of the gipsy mother gleamed out through the clefts of rock, silent and passionless, as if she had been a portion of the rock itself. Far below her dwelling, half-hidden by clumps of trees, a smooth lake flashed and sparkled in the subdued light, and mirrored back luxuriant verdure, and purple clouds, and glimpses of the blue sky, as if another world and another heaven were hidden in its depths! Further on, the river went moaning its lonely way to the sea, and on either side of its banks might be seen, by the kindling watchfires, innumerable groups of fantastic creatures, whose wild, fierce manner and grotesque apparel marked them as a race both hated and feared by the few daring and adventurous settlers who had emigrated, and made for themselves, as they thought, both homes, and a security from intrusion, among the fastnesses of the Alleghany Mountains. Thefts

and plunder were incidents of common occurrence, and not unfrequently the crime of murder was added to the list of persecutions heaped upon the inhabitants, until finding their own strength so inferior to that of the gipsy clan, they were forced to retreat and make for themselves a new home, many miles removed from the spot endeared by old memories and pleasant associations. The story is still extant among the inhabitants of Johnstown, of a band of lawless depredators who infested the mountains, and were for years, while the country was young, a terror and a reproach upon that neighborhood. Unlike the generality of those roving clans, each one was a chief in his own right—acting for himself alone, and taking the responsibility of his own crimes. But there was *one* voice that had power to tame and subdue the revellers even in their wildest orgies—there was one eye beneath whose glance the most daring spirit quailed, and grew mild and humble as a dependent child. Mabel, the gipsy mother, was an oracle of wisdom, power and strength to the superstitious vagrants of the mountains. Fierce, desperate and determined, with a heart whose greatest necessity was that of exclusive power, with an intellect clear, forcible and brilliant, yet perverted and depraved, the influence she possessed among her band was rather that of mind over *matter*, than soul struggling against soul. With an intimate knowledge of nature, she had taken in the vast sweep of human aims, human objects and human weaknesses, from no other desire than the coldly speculative one, of devising just how far such weakness could subserve to her own individual advancement.

The hopes of her youth had been crushed out, by the treachery of one to whom she had entrusted the wealth of a pure heart; and when she saw the star of her future sinking in a night of gloom—and when she knew herself to have become a thing of reproach and scorn, her goaded soul turned madly upon *itself*, until she grew to be a mass of dangerous and distorted energy, flung out upon the world to feed and riot upon social deformity and crime.

Not one among the band over whom she exercised such an unlimited power could tell who or what she was. All known of her history was, that during one of the severe tempests which are peculiar to the Alleghanies, she had been discovered, watching by the side of two infants, apparently of an equal age, and endeavoring to screen them from the impending danger. The first impulse of the gipsy, as her commanding form towered up from among the swaying leaves, was that of terror, but when he caught the glance of

her large, fierce eyes, fixed so wildly upon him, by that sympathy of soul, which we in our poverty of language call mesmerism, he found himself irresistibly drawn to the strange woman, and in a few moments more, herself and children were safely sheltered within the rock cave, whose jutting roof shelved down almost to the river's brink. With the perceptive faculties of an originally strong mind, thus early matured, Mabel was not long in satisfying herself that *mystery* was the only implement to be used in working out a strong hold in the heart of that lawless and ignorant band, and with a crafty judgment, she planned and executed her will, until she became both a terror and an idol to the impressible gipses. Life or death, punishment and advancement, all were at the disposal of the gipsy mother, and no infliction could be more fearful than to meet her flashing eyes bent in anger upon some unfortunate culprit. Yet she was too crafty and systematic to abuse the vantage-ground she had gained; so each year rooted her more firmly in their natures, until the name of Mabel the gipsy mother became a terror and a fear to the surrounding inhabitants, few of whom had ever dared venture within her dwelling, although there were many powerful inducements, not the least of which was that of glancing into the future, to which Mabel assumed, the better to aid her purposes of mysticism, the power of holding communion. For years there had been but *one* child visible in the rock dwelling, but a little mound, bright with blossoms and clinging vines, told of an early death, and a pleasant sleep among the bright and beautiful things of nature, and upon this mound the sad eyes of the bereaved mother were riveted. There was no pride upon her pale face *now*! affection had gained supremacy over ambition; and the soul that had been so long a mausoleum for ruined intellect, lighted up under the influence of memories, painful as they were distinct. The brow of the gipsy mother was pale as ashes! The eyes, so brilliant at all times, gleamed out like live coals from the embers of past desolation. The night of guilt had come, and there was no hope to point out a bright to-morrow. Her old life of shame and sin had grown dark and repulsive—a *better* nature was struggling within her bosom, and a new life had sprung between her and crime—a life of bitter, intense despair! With fearful distinctness, the vision of her old home rose up like a mockery in the dim twilight of memory! She saw how a world of crime had uprisen from the ashes of purity; and over its blasted soil there had gathered a mass of black clouds to shut out forever every throb of good-

ness from the polluted atmosphere of her bosom. For a moment she stood silent and motionless; then contending passions lighted up her face, each in its turn to leave it deathly pale again! Tears were in her eyes, as, link after link she unwound the chain of past incidents—saw how crime had been interwoven with crime—event tangled up with event, until a dark destiny had been wrought out by the agency of a mind wilfully distorted to answer the purposes of a revengeful spirit. Almost painfully the time came back with memory, when, as a child, she had clung with a loving fondness to the sheltering arms of her gentle mother! Her soul, that had been a chaos of guilt, crime and despair, grew clear and brilliant in the light of thought, until even the ruins of intellectual greatness were beautiful and holy; for a child's love for her dead mother was blended with a deep worship for the only living witness of her guilt—her own helpless and innocent daughter. Ah, women have many weaknesses and failings, when the sky is bright above them; but in the darkness and the storms, whether of guilt or sorrow, the soul of a true woman is a priceless gift from the Almighty! Again her visions were changing, like some unwelcome phantasmagoria of the mind; for her lips were compressed and rigid, and she clasped her hands over her brow, as if to shake off the influence of some hideous dream, in whose mazes she hoped to find herself entangled. "Seventeen years," said she, "seventeen years this day"—a low, wild laugh woke up the echoes of the rock cave, and startled the gipsy from her reverie. With a look of habitual fierceness, she peered wildly among the dense shadows which were piled around the cave, but as nothing met her gaze of an unusual nature, she again resumed her station, but not to indulge in the same train of thought. "How late Zoe lingers among the mountains this evening," she murmured, as if communing with herself. "The wild blood of her race finds sufficient food among the cliffs and valleys in which she has been nurtured." Mabel paused in surprise, for, as if called into life by her words, a low, sweet strain of music drifted down the mountains, and mingled its cadence with the rustling leaves. There was nothing unusual in that, for Mabel had instructed her daughter in the various accomplishments of which she herself was mistress, and Zoe's skill in music, and the mastery she had acquired over the difficult but impassioned strains of old time composers, was a strong link in the chain with which she held the hearts of her tribe. Upon whatever the mother's fierceness failed to take effect, the daughter's winning manner and

melodious voice was sure to be triumphant. Musical instruments of an uncouth make, yet capable of producing thrilling effect, were a plentiful commodity in the gipsy's cave. It was not the music, rippling down so sweetly at that still hour, which arrested Mabel's attention; but there were words wedded to it—words of passion and devotedness, which Zoe could never have learned without some efficient master of the heart. Again the strings of a lute were swept with a light hand, and a voice, melodious and pure, was heard wedded to the following words:

"There's midnight gloom about my path,
And midnight gloom above me,
And none to smile away my fears—
And no one here to love me;
O, give my heart one bud of love—
One blossom it may cherish;
That I may see it fade and die—
Then—droop myself, and perish!"

Slowly and sadly the symphony died away amid the forest gloom; Mabel drew her form up to its full height, but the blazing eyes and the quivering lips told of the mental agitation of a great soul! The long white hair floated down over her shoulders like a snowy scarf, and mingled with the drapery of gold-cloth which depended from her waist. Detaching a whistle from her girdle, she blew a low, shrill note, which was answered from the mountain, and in a few moments the crackling leaves and the swaying limbs gave warning of the approach of a second party. Mabel gathered the drapery around her, cast a lingering glance at the flower-wreathed grave, and was lost to sight within the interstices of her rock home!

Probably no section of our country has met with less appreciation from writers of fiction, either of home or foreign manufacture, than that known as the Alleghany Mountains, and yet from its very wildness, and almost sublimity of desolation, none presents a broader scope for the fancy-flights of an imaginative mind. Its dearth of historic material is amply supplied by innumerable legends and old time traditions, some of them so vague and conflicting, that they are preserved rather as relics of by-gone superstition, than for any belief entertained with regard to their reality. Some two months previous to the occurrence of incidents related above, the ragged cliffs and jutting rocks framed a most exquisite picture of life and loveliness, from whose reflection the outline of my present story has been drawn.

It was summer, and the trees were burthened with foliage, and the flowers bursting through the moss, were blooming all along the wood-paths, as if some conquering giant, returning

home from successful strife, had scattered the trophies of his victory with a liberal hand. Far up the cliffs, a young man of some twenty summers had threaded his way over masses of broken rock, and through thickets of stunted hemlock, to gaze down upon the wilderness of green leaves throbbing in the sunlight, like a great wild sea, impatient of restraint. Far beneath his feet, where the shadows were most intense, could be seen glimmerings of a clear river, which broke up through the underbrush, and drifted in among the blossoms that bent their bright lips down to its very brink. All along the banks were clumps of maple and willow, turning out their silver linings in the rich light, while huge cliffs and fragments of rocks, shelving far over its bosom, completed a picture almost fearful in its sublimity. Weary and listless, the youthful devotee had flung himself upon a bed of moss, and was already revelling in dreams of brilliant woo, when a light hand rested upon his shoulder, a face of exquisite loveliness, with a pair of wild, dreaming eyes, peered curiously into his own. Starting from his slumber, he sought to detain the fair intruder; but with an expression of terrified wonder she eluded his grasp, sprang to the precipice, and securing a heavy vine, swung herself wildly down the cliff.

In the rapidity of her descent, the frail support gave way, and the next moment the beautiful girl lay a senseless mass at the foot of the ravine. With a self-possession beyond his years, the young man sprang from rock to rock, and was soon at her side, bathing her temples with the pure water that trickled through the interstices of the cliff, and lifting the thicket of curls from her bosom, that the fresh air might have full power upon a frame whose quivering pulse gave evidence that life was still left to her. For hours and hours the senseless girl lay in his arms, and when the evening came, and the shadows began to thicken among the trees, there had been a tale of love, beautiful and holy in its trustingness, breathed into ears, and nestling upon a heart that should forget its cadence nevermore—not even in eternity! There had been a soul-worship extended and exchanged, as spiritual and refined as it was powerful and intense, and the pure girl and dreaming youth had matured and grown into thoughtful creatures, whose future lives were to be devoted to carving into visible forms the shades of past dreams and past imaginings. So does love ever change the current of human nature!

Morning after morning Zoe might be seen clambering over brushwood and fallen trees, to meet her youthful lover upon the cliff; and when

the storms came, and the lightnings flashed through the forest, there was a sheltering rock, made beautiful by flowering shrubs, wherein the loving pair found safety and shelter. There was no thought of wrong, no depth of passion to disturb the purity of their intercourse, for they were alike, children of nature, whose love and religion were a blending of the same ingredients, and had a source from the well-spring of superstition. To look into Zoe's deep eyes, one would have felt that at their foundation was a soul strong in its power, yet earnest and true, a heart wild and daring, yet full of gentle impulses and womanly attributes—one to rest in but one bosom, and rest there forever—to love but once, and that once for all eternity. Such was Zoe Montano, daughter of the gipsy queen of the Alleghanies.

The bright blue eye and frank, generous countenance of the youthful lover were sufficient evidences that he could claim no kindred with the clan of outlaws above alluded to, and the sentiment of intense hatred which existed between the settlers and themselves, would have convinced the lovers, had they paused to reflect, that a union would never be tolerated by either party, even should those most in power desire it. But when did lovers ever reflect, when reflection brought doubt or pain? or how could they think of wrong or crime, in the concealment of that which created such a heaven of happiness to their own hearts?

Zoe had forgotten home, forgotten her tribe, forgotten everything but the bright-haired youth, who had taught her the secrets of her own spirit; and when her mother's shrill call sounded through the forest, she started as if it had been a death-knell, and pressing her lover's hand, she glided from his side, and was soon seen to enter the leafy door of her rock dwelling!

Pale, mute and motionless, Mabel reclined upon her couch of rich furs, gazing down into a sweet face, upturned to hers with an expression of devotedness not to be mistaken. The stern determination and indomitable will that characterized Mabel the sorceress, were all fading from the heart of Mabel the mother, and the fierce eyes which were wont to strike terror to all who had the daring to confront their glance, grew mild and gentle under the influence of that sacred and holy impulse—a *mother's love*! Ah, there are but few sentiments of the human heart which cannot be described with an accuracy almost real; but there are no words in which to paint the deep and abiding fervency of a mother's love! Her care, her fear, her solitude, all may find true colors, but not her *love*—that is sacred as God.

pure as heaven, lasting as eternity. And if the love of those who are surrounded with every luxury—with the companionship of the great and good—if their love for their offspring is thus intense, what must have been that of the gipsy mother, in a wilderness filled with reckless hearts and savage forms? What must have been her grief, to know that the child, whom it was a sin thus to worship, had taken to her bosom another counsellor, and another love, to weaken the strong ties of filial affection which she had so striven to bind around her spirit? The bitterness of her own dark life seemed gathering and concentrating in force, to fall in retribution upon her child. She thought of the hours when her own heart had been made up of trustingness and affection—when faith in the past, and hopefulness for the future, were as bright and unclouded in her bosom as a summer sky; and the tears were in her eyes, and her whole frame was agitated with emotion, “as the taint of wasted years left a dark shadow upon the fountains of memory!”

“Zoe,” said she, at length, “who taught you that song you were singing but now upon the mountain?”

The blood rushed in torrents over the face and neck of the beautiful girl, as she met her mother's searching glance fixed in such earnestness upon her, but to the question she offered no reply.

“Has Zoe secrets from her mother's ear? Can she content herself with listening to the cold, hollow sophistry of a *stranger*, to the exclusion of a mother's love and a mother's advice?”

Still no reply came from the quivering lips, but lower and lower drooped her head, until she sank in a burst of passionate supplication at the gipsy's feet. Gathering her in her arms, Mabel smoothed back the dark hair from her brow, and there in the waning light listened calmly to the outpourings of affection, breathed in words of eloquence which spring to the lips that love has opened, naturally as perfume from an opening rose. Zoe told of her meeting on the mountain, and how she had thought her lover a statue carved from the rock, and of her surprise and subsequent terror, when she found him to be a living, breathing creature, and of her gratitude for his kindness in preserving her life; but not one word of love escaped her lips, although the rich blood which mantled her cheek told more than words, of the fervent, clinging trust which predominated over every other sentiment. The sweet hour of confidence was disturbed by the sudden and somewhat abrupt entrance of a stranger, whose appearance was indicative of a more

refined mind than was usually met with in that wild vicinity.

Mabel rose and motioned him to a seat; but he acknowledged the courtesy with a slight bow, without availing himself of her kindness. Accustomed to implicit obedience, the gipsy raised her dark eyes in astonishment, but only met in return a firm and self-assured glance.

“What seek you in the cave of the sorceress?” said she, with pointed emphasis, thinking from his manner that he was not aware of his dangerous proximity.

A half perceptible sneer curled the lip of the stranger, as he made a request to see her for a few moments alone. With a stately step Mabel led the way through jutting rocks, to a room curiously concealed, in a distant corner of the cave. Upon the walls were uncouth sculpturings of demons, and satyrs, and other hideous contortions of the mythological creed, which gave to the place a degree of wildness well calculated to inspire the beholder with a feeling of awe. Far in the corner, where the shadows were deepest, and just perceptible by the glimmering light, a huge skeleton with its fleshless bones—a fitting sentinel for so wild a spot. Coiled by the side of the skeleton, with its slimy folds half-encircling its fleshless limbs, was a hideous serpent, from whose eyes ever and anon came flashes of fire, followed by a low, peculiar rattle. A large shelf of rock formed the ceiling, from the centre of which gleamed a single light in the shape of a star; the whole place was calculated to excite a feeling like that of a frightful dream in which one knows it is a dream, and yet finds himself powerless to shake it off. A rude fire place in the cleft of a rock threw out an occasional broad glare as the wind swept moaning through the crevices, and then died away again leaving the star alone in its brilliancy.

Mabel paused in the centre of the room, and surveyed her visitor, to note the impression such mock-mystery was likely to make upon his mind; but the same caustic sneer was all the evidence he gave of having observed the mystic appointments. The gipsy had at last found a soul, proud and exacting as her own, one not to be overcome by superstitious fear, nor yet to yield a deference to the sorceress that would not have been extended to the woman. Mabel felt this, and from an intuitive knowledge of human nature, guessed too truly that he gazed upon her as a wicked and hardened woman; one whose life of intrigue, deception and fraud had justly cast her out from the sympathies of her race, and made her a terror and reproach. For a moment the consciousness of the thought flung its shadow

over the face of Mabel, then passed away, to leave her calm and self-possessed as ever. Fixing her dark eyes, which had yet never failed in their power of fascination, upon the stranger, she again questioned his purpose in her dwelling.

"Would you read the future in my eyes?" said she.

"The *present* is our own," replied the stranger. "The *future* is left to us—let it rest. No, Mabel—for that, I'm told is your name."

A slight inclination of the stately head, and an increased severity of manner, was the only answer she deigned to his question.

"I have not risked my life in your devil's den, without fully calculating the necessity for such an emergency. It is of the *future* I came to speak, but *not* to pry into the mysteries known only to God himself."

"Scoffer!" muttered Mabel, between her clenched teeth.

The stranger continued, without heeding the interruption, "blood has been poured out like water to satisfy the cravings of your tribe, for a revenge of fancied wrong."

"*Fancied!*" said Mabel, towering to her full height, and flashing her dark eyes upon the speaker, with a look of incarnate scorn.

"We will not discuss the question—it has been and will be the result of contending parties—this feast of blood! There is but one way to save the remnants of either race."

"And that?" questioned Mabel.

"To unite them by bonds of relationship!"

"But how?"

"You are the chief of your tribe, as I am of mine. You have a child—a daughter, whose grace and beauty has been the theme of more than one heart among the simple settlers."

"And *you*, with your weight of years and worldly knowledge, would marry my daughter? You, crafty that you are!"

"No! I have a son, whose years, pursuits and habits would better accord with the enthusiast of the mountain."

For a moment Mabel seemed lost in deep thought. "Has he seen her?" she questioned.

"No."

"Does he know of this proposal?"

"No."

"Will he consent?"

"*Consent!* The son of Martin Huse the mountain ranger has no *will* but that of his father."

There was a wildness and determination in his manner of speech that accorded well with the reckless nature of Mabel.

"You have trusted me more than mortal has

dared do for many years. If you can spare me an hour for conversation, I have a story to reveal; and then if you desire it, Zoe shall become the wife of your son, the link to unite our divided band."

"Poor Zoe! there was a cup of deep and bitter woe preparing for her lips. "You would scarcely think," said Mabel, turning to the stranger with a smile, "that an old woman like me, running wild among the rocks and mountains of the Alleghanies, could boast of a story in her own right; yet so it is. There is more romance in the common incidents of everyday life, if rightly considered, than the novelist could rake from the furnace of imagination! Have you time to listen to what I may relate?"

The stranger answered in the affirmative.

"I must be a faithful transcript," she continued, "of a dark life, made still more dark by crime! A story of wrongs and struggles, and temptations almost beyond the power of woman to endure, yet borne how patiently, I may not say—through years of self-banishment and self-reproach! I have but one promise to extort before I proceed—that until my death, which cannot be far distant, you will preserve what I now disclose an inviolate secret." The stranger assented, and Mabel commenced her story.

The single star flashed its brightness down upon the face of Mabel, and flickered to and fro among the shadows of the cave, giving to the skeleton an appearance of hideous life, and lighting up the brilliant orbs of the serpent with almost supernatural lustre! A deep feeling of awe was creeping over the senses of the stranger, and he felt as if his own heart was becoming as cold as the rocks by which he was surrounded. The flashing eyes—the gestures of the gipsy, which were growing wilder and more impassioned, as she raised the lid from off the sepulchre of past pleasures and past hopes, seemed to have commenced their work of mental fascination upon him.

"It is indeed an agony," she began, "to probe heart-wounds that have been fostering for years in silent desolation, and a woman must needs tremble for her power, when she stoops to gather up the fragments of a world she has seen crumbling beneath her feet! My years have not all been passed among camps and watchfires, although the moral deformity of my nature—wild and reckless as it was, tempted me at an early age to leave my home among the peasants of Italy, and associate myself with a gipsy band, then located amid the ruins of the Rhine. I will not tell you *why* I forsook my home; enough to know there was a strange, harsh face, where

my gentle mother had sat for years; a repulsive, unloving face, whose slightest glance froze the blood upon my heart, and when it haunted me most, a rebellious nature warmed into life, and an only child was lost to her father's cottage forever more! *Fatality*, men scoff at it, and yet it has pursued me at every turn of my dark life. It gave me an intense desire for exclusive love, yet withheld the means for its attainment—it gave me woman's passion, without woman's fear—woman's love for purity, without woman's scorn for crime, and now that I stand here desolate and alone—wrecked in mind, soul and intellect—flung out like a weed from the garden of social life, to perish amid the tempest and the gloom—now, I trace back each step of my life, each sorrow, sin and crime, to the influence of that one word *fatality*. While yet a child, there came legends of a new world, uprising like a gem from the sea—where a daring few had written their names in letters of gold upon the shield of fame—where wealth came for the asking, and health and happiness were its constant attendants. Our band was broken up—some departed for the new el-dorado, of which they had been told, others turned their attention to gaining and hoarding wealth, as if it must not all end in the same foul grave at last. I remained under the protection of an old woman, whose ostensible method of livelihood was that of fortune-telling; and from her I learned the art of mysticism, which has served so well among the gipseys of these mountains—who, as you may have perceived, are a portion of our English band. Impelled by curiosity, there came one, whose veins were filled with noble blood. Bold, brilliant and courteous, he won from my heart a feeling of reverence, which soon ripened into love. There was a difference in his manner when addressing me, so unlike that toward my associates, that what my love did not accord him, was tendered by my pride. I loved that man—ay, and do—though years have passed since that time; years that have left the traces of sorrow and crime upon my head. Even hatred for myself—scorn for the world—a yearning for revenge—could not overshadow it; there it lives, bright and beautiful amid the ruin it has caused, because I loved him with a singleness of purpose, that wound his image round my heart as never woman's love entwined the image of her adoration, and yet he trifled with a soul that had grown to his own; he trampled upon a heart impetuous and fearless; and when the great love of my life recoiled upon my own spirit, it left me what I am—aimless and alone, with nothing true or real about me. In the silence of a summer's night, a child was laid

to sleep in my arms. There was no feeling of shame or wrong within my bosom, as I kissed, for the first time, the precious boon, for my only knowledge was gleaned from perverted legends of olden time, and my only religion, that of mysticism and superstition. I only saw *his* image; and when weeks had passed, and health was again restored, never dreaming of the impropriety, I started alone, with my child in my arms, to visit the princely chateau of its father. The shadows were just gathering around the mansion, as I arrived, and in the fulness of my joy, I paused to gaze for a time upon the massive walls that contained my life of life. Voices quiet and subdued fell upon my ear like soft music, and glancing through the latticed blinds, I saw the man for whom I had sold my soul to shame, bending over a fair young creature, in whose embrace a child, not unlike my own, was held. The truth burst like fire upon my brain. I had been duped by a villain. I know not how I bore the dreadful revelation. I only remember on that night, when the earth was asleep, I crept through the blinds, saw them slumbering together, and in the tumult of passion pervading my whole nature, I struck *her* to the heart, while she nestled in his arms. In the confusion I escaped with her child and mine. How long my soul was divorced from thought or reason, I know not, or how, or why, or by what means I came to this country. When I awoke to reason, familiar faces were bending over me—I recognized old friends, but I was forgotten by them. It answered my purpose never to reveal my name. I became powerful among the clan—but you know the remainder of my history—suffice it to say, that *his* child died seventeen years ago this day, and *mine*, if you choose to claim her, is at your disposal."

"To save my people—yes—our rites are simple—to-morrow when the sun is up, I will come attended by the bridegroom, and a simple pastor who resides with us. Is it enough?" questioned the stranger.

"It is," said Mabel.

The stranger left suddenly as he came, and Mabel was alone. That night there were pleadings and protestations and prayers in the cave of the gipsey mother, and when the morning came, and the mist began to roll up from the river, and the flowers to blush in the rich light, a small party was seen coming down a mountain path that wound round the cave and down by the gipsey encampment. At their approach Zoe fled tremblingly to a corner of the cave, and buried her head deep within the rich furs there extended. The party entered solemn and stately, as if they

had marched to a funeral instead of a wedding. Mabel rose to her feet in an attitude of picturesque wildness, her white hair floated loosely over her shoulders, her robe showered about her form, and from her eyes gleamed an awful *will*, dark as madness, still as eternity, and resolute as death. Zoe glanced up but once from her pillow, but seeing the determination stamped upon her mother's brow, she knew her fate was sealed, and sank down again in hopeless, tearless despair.

“*Take her,*” said the gipsy mother, waving her hand with an imperative gesture. A quick convulsive sob broke from among the furs, when a young man of graceful appearance advanced from the party, and bent down by the side of the weeping girl. “Zoe,” said he, in a low, pleasant voice. There was a start which sent the maiden's golden curls quivering like sunbeams over her neck—an exclamation of joyful surprise, and quick as thought, Zoe Montano lay in the arms of William Huse, as if she had grown there forever. She was his own forever.

THE DAUGHTER OF A KING.

BY ANNIE H. OSGOOD.

THE golden sheen of England's autumnal beauty lay fair and radiant over the ancient palace of Whitehall. It was in 1533, when Mary had followed her brother, the good young King Edward, to a throne from which death had early snatched him. And now the palace was a royal prison for his other sister, the Princess Elizabeth.

Morning at Whitehall. The few ladies whom they had spared to attend upon the princess, were clustered around her, trying with woman's wit to amuse the royal prisoner. It was a thankless office, for Elizabeth loved not the society of her own sex. She had far rather have been surrounded by those whose courtly grace and winning flattery would have penetrated to that vulnerable part of her heart which her future courtiers knew so well how to find.

For several hours she had been restless and uneasy. In vain had her attendants brought the lute and given her the sweetest music of the period, much of which was composed for and dedicated to the princess herself. There were tender love songs written by the true-hearted poet who loved Elizabeth's mother, the ill-starred Anne Boleyn; and as the young princess caught the mellow strains, she felt that she would give worlds to inspire such loving words.

Pensively she hung her head, dwelling upon those rich melodies, and mingling with them the remembrance of episodes of her early life, when it was said that her passionate nature had nearly betrayed her into imprudences, which sully alike the characters of queen or peasant maiden. A true daughter of Henry Eighth, and no less a true one of Anne Boleyn, it was not to be wondered at if she were possessed of strong passions. At length she aroused herself from the fit of mournful recollection into which she had fallen, and assumed a gayer mood. She even trolled forth a lively ditty; but when it was ended, she said:

"It is hard for a caged bird to sing, my damsels, and besides, my royal sister might deem it heresy, should any one report to her gracious majesty that her captive dared open her mouth save for an Ave Maria."

"My gracious princess, for Heaven's sake, hush! The very walls may whisper to the queen that you make light of her."

"God's death, and so I do, Alicia! Am I not the true queen, and was not her birth at-

tainted? Did not my royal father decide that I was the true heir to the crown? There is not a shadow of common right in her retaining a throne to which her claim was long ago set aside as illegal."

The princess had wrought herself up to such a pitch of indignation that she did not hear a loud knocking at the door of her apartment. Her ladies heard it, however, and quaked with fear when they remembered how fatal might be the consequences of her rashness in uttering such words. Nor was their alarm allayed when on opening the door a troop of Elizabeth's bitterest enemies at court appeared, among whom were Gardiner, Paget, Howard and Sussex.

The haughty look had not faded from the lip of the princess, nor was the entrance of the prelate and noblemen calculated to calm down the angry feelings which she had been indulging toward Mary. She remembered, however, in season to prevent anything serious, that, as a prisoner, she had better refrain from any show of displeasure. Resuming a serene aspect, she asked to what event she owed so sudden and unexpected a visit.

Gardiner, although evidently much embarrassed, replied, hesitatingly, that he had a warrant from the queen to commit her highness to the Tower.

Her severity, real or assumed, was gone. The veins in her forehead seemed swollen to bursting, and her hands were clenched until the sharp nails entered her flesh. The long, golden ringlets were flung back and displayed the broad, open brow in its full height and breadth. It needed not her next words to show that she was the daughter of Henry Eighth.

"This is noble, this is brave of you, my lord prelate, and you, gentlemen of the court of England! Marry, but ye are growing wanton with your prosperity and power, when ye can take a king's daughter to the Tower without a sign of guilt upon her part."

Sussex explained that it was the queen's command, for which they were no way accountable; and added a reproof for the bitterness with which she assailed them for simply obeying their royal mistress. It was with added bitterness that he went on:

"'Fore God, our queen herself dare not address us as you have done, and we will not bear it even from a princess of the blood royal. So have a care, madam, and treat the servants of the crown with the consideration that belongs to your dignity and to theirs."

His assured and confident address brought Elizabeth to a sense of her danger in thus giving

way to the passion that possessed her; and she listened more patiently to the words of Paget and Howard, who informed her that she was suspected of conniving at the treachery of Wyate.

"I do not doubt that your highness will be able to endure the investigation which, after all, is but a mere formality. Her majesty is, of course, well convinced of her sister's loyalty and affection—"

But he had gone a step too far. The lion nature of King Henry again predominated in his daughter, and she threw back a glance full of ire upon the speaker.

"It is well! I am ready now. God's death, it would irk me to live in the same world with such traitors to honor as they whom I see before me. Let the measure of infamy be full. The same block at which my unhappy mother suffered, after being hunted down by court wolves, will serve for her daughter. I scorn you all! Ye are false, all of ye, and none falsest that you who wear the holy robes, and disgrace them, too."

This was addressed to Gardiner, who turned pale with rage, and commanded her to prepare instantly for her journey, muttering inarticulately some sentence in which "woman's tongue" was alone distinguishable.

Elizabeth, however, was speedy in her preparations. Two of her ladies only were permitted to attend her, and with this scanty retinue for a royal princess, she went on board the queen's barge. Stately as a queen, Elizabeth took her seat beneath the gold and crimson awning, while Gardiner and the lords took theirs opposite. All was silent, as if some criminal was going to his death, instead of a young and lovely princess going at the command of a queenly sister to test the loyalty of her cause. As the courtiers looked at her and marked the deep crimson spot which outraged dignity had painted upon her cheek, they felt almost ashamed that they had been chosen to imprison a girl of twenty years on a charge of treason and conspiracy.

There were those on the bank of the river that saw her whom they fondly hoped to hail as their future queen, thus spirited away by the grim adherents of her who was already called Bloody Mary, although the word was spoken in hushed whispers. Already there was a dull murmur from their lips. Elizabeth caught the faint sound, and bowed her head with a graceful recognition of the faces of friends whom she saw there. That recognition at such a moment! How it riveted their hearts to her, and how it increased their hatred of her who occupied the throne which they knew their favorite would grace so well. It was an earnest of that devoted

affection that followed the maiden queen to the latest hour of a reign that involved so many inconsistencies of character, and was proof against them all.

When she raised her head, the sun was setting, but the whole broad west was one blaze of golden glory. The prelate's eyes were directed to the same object. To both a prophetic voice seemed to whisper. To the ambitious man the fading orb said, "Thou, too, shalt sink as I sink." To Elizabeth the radiant scene brought a different tale of future power and eminence, and a voice breathed in her ear, "This fair England shall yet be swayed by King Henry's daughter." No wonder that the light came to her eye, and that the heavy burden was raised from a heart that believed the prophecy.

In another moment her light foot was upon the platform of the Traitor's Gate! She looked up at the gloomy pile that threw its dark shadow over her crimsoned cheek. It paled not. The omen had done its work, and the royal heart of Elizabeth did not quail, even when she entered the place that had been the sepulchre of so many hopes; but, in the hour of future greatness, that moment was remembered. Did not the shadows of Norfolk, of Northumberland, of the well-beloved Essex, and of the young and lovely Scottish queen arise to strike home to her heart the remembrance of her own hour of peril?

Five years after this night, Mary, sick, perhaps of her bloody career, lonely and desolate, though a wife and a queen, disappointed in the dearest hopes of woman, ill and suffering, laid down in the grave, her cruel heart and crimson hand. And she who was carried beneath that golden sunset, a prisoner, was proclaimed all over that fair domain, its queen, the rightful sovereign of England and Scotland, bought by the death of the two Marys, and of Ireland, to which she bore no sovereign's love. Alas, that human greatness must always spring from open graves! Yet, at the last, the death of one victim of her love and cruelty opened her own grave.

Forty-five years had she queened it over England, whose throne she had ascended at twenty-five. Loving and beloved, for she had bestowed her affections upon more than one, and had been sought by many, she had refused to ally herself with any one. The last love, Essex, received from her a ring, with the solemn pledge that into whatever disgrace he might fall, if he would send her the ring, she would hear and answer his petition.

After his trial and condemnation to death, the thought occurred to him that he would try the effect of the ring. He intrusted it, however, to a

faithless hand, and Elizabeth, who, day after day had watched and waited for the loving appeal, distressed and indignant at the failure to secure her sympathy and pardon, signed the death warrant.

How that woman's stern soul melted when the terrible deed was done! If oceans of tears would have availed, she would have shed them all, to have revived the silent pulse to a heart that had perhaps ever loved her, aged and faded as she was. Alas, Elizabeth had asked and hoped too much from the human hearts around her. She felt now, how bitter was age and decay, and would have given her throne for one loving word from any being on earth.

And, failing this, the poor old queen, stung into madness by the treachery and deception which had been shown her, lay down upon her cushions, refusing even the comfort of a bed, and breathed out a life at once so grand and so solitary. To her had never been granted that beautiful solace of saying, "I dwell among my own kindred." All her life long she was a desolate woman. Let us hope that, at that bar where human imperfections are righteously judged, the recording angel will have blotted out the dismal transcript of her vanity, her weakness and her cruelty, and present only the page that tells of her many virtues.

[ORIGINAL.]

"PERMIT DOW AND I."

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BY WILLIAM W. MONTAGUE.  
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I HAVE heretofore enlightened the world in "Me and my Wife," regarding the splendid results of our marriage; but never have I related one of the unfortunate circumstances attendant upon my separation from my wife in our honeymoon. I will try and do so now:

You are all aware that my courtship was a brief one; that my marriage was a hasty one; and I whisper it to you now, in strictest confidence, that my day of repentance and tribulation is a long one. It does not necessarily follow, I am told, that courtships should be brief, marriages hasty, or their results, unhappiness. I am willing to bow humbly, as I am thus rebuked by older and wiser (perhaps happier) married men; but I maintain it to the last, with all the spirit I have left (which is, under the circumstances, but little), that any man who has had the ill-fortune to marry a Dow (and their family of married daughters is large), endorses my opinion in every respect.

I would say further, in weak support of this

theory, that Andrew Jackson Middlepain, who married Permit's eldest sister, Prudence Dow, now occupies cell 17 in the Lunatic Asylum at Worcester; that Abner Spillbanks, who married her sister Remembrance, was cut down three times in his own attic, after three vain attempts to drown remembrance (I don't mean his wife) by hanging himself—and all the druggists in the town have been notified to dispose of no arsenic, or roach and rat exterminators to the same; that Increase Crableaf, who married my wife's youngest sister Keziah, attended the annual charity dinner in his own town, and when informed that the set-out was only intended for paupers, he declared he was more hungry than any of them, for when he took surreptitiously a ham bone from the closet to save himself from famine, she pursued him with a broom into the street, and threatened him with a charge of "petty larceny." Increase got his dinner off the town that day, and I hear from a reliable source that Keziah has applied for a divorce in consequence.

Of course I know Permit is fond of me—that she is fattening me on *Revelenta Arabica*, my present obesity acknowledges; but that the married condition is a blissful one, I deny—at least so far as I understand it. I know this is not telling you of the laughable adventure I had in finding my wife during the honeymoon; but how can I help thinking of the time when midnight hours were no crime; when cocktails were a solace and a comfort; when billiards and late oysters were necessities of life; and the opera was the most complete luxury in the world? Yes, I can't help thinking of how we used to meet at Sampson's—Smith, Jones, Bullion, Bags, Robinson and myself—and drink hot whiskey punches when the weather was cold, and "cobblers" when the weather was warm, and champagne at any time (when we could get anybody else to pay for it). And then how jolly we got; and what a rousing chorus we gave "Begone, dull care!"—and how reckless we became of the watchmen; and how we tried pen-knives in the doors of our boarding-houses instead of latch-keys; and how we stumbled up stairs over the boots in the passages; and stray pitchers at the doors of hydropathic gentlemen were our especial delight to treat to a "smash," and, "ha, ha!"—Pray excuse me, I am afraid I am sipping too much of this "morning call" even now, so I shall go on, not forgetting what I intended to write about. But my wrongs are monstrous. It is no wonder I am liable to get drunk from pure absence of mind.

It was down in Bangor where I first met Permit at the "quilting," and she was on a visit to

the "Spells." (The Spells, you know, of Queer Corner) I knew, of course, that she lived at the village of Licksblue the 1st (Licksblue the 2d is about four miles out of Salem on the Squig-mire Turnpike), and I had no notion of getting a Permit for marriage then; but somehow or other the folks in Bangor got the notion that I was a "catch"—what this means I have not the slightest notion, other than I dimly conceive it must be something very unfortunate. Permit was very agreeable, pretty, rosy, dimpled, curly hair, good teeth, and a very loving pair of lips. I spent an evening alone in Spells' parlor with her—do not remember much, except that I thought I was somehow distantly related to the angels—heard a little cooing as Permit sung—did a little wooing I suppose to help along, said "love" two or three times in a sort of soliloquy, was helped to some of Old Spells's pippins by Permit, kissed her dreamily once or twice, she did the same to me a few times or more, found my head gradually turning round and round, remember thinking that Bangor must be a very pleasant place to have such a nice house as Spells in it.

Spent two or three hours in this strange manner at Spells; when I was about going, I recollect it took me just a half hour by my watch to procure my hat (kissed Permit once or twice in the interval), half an hour to reach my cane (holding her hand and quoting Byron in the pauses), one hour to reach the front door (sundry kisses in the dark hall), twenty minutes saying "good-night" at the garden gate.

"Good night! good night!" parting is such sweet sorrow—a good Yankee hug here—and ran off towards home very dizzy and happy hearing the murmur of Permit at parting. "Engaged," said she; "caged," echoed I. "What a poet!"—"I know it." "My!"—"Why sigh? good-by!" I spoke or she did; it made no difference. I was as happy as an idiot—more an idiot than happy, I think now.

Went home that night and sat by the fire with my hat on (this I never do unless something extraordinary happens), said nothing, thought of nothing but Permit. She was an angel. I could see her face in the fire; I could see it in the shadows on the walls, ever blooming, radiant and beautiful. I smoked one of my friend's cigars, still thinking of Permit; the curls of the smoke were not half so graceful as her curls, as they reeled over her white shoulders; I drank two or three large drinks out of my friend's liquor-case—drank to Permit. Thought it was such a sublime compliment drinking alone in the darkness, that I drank to her again. The sweet madness

of my thoughts of her made me drink again and again. She was mine; more brandy. We were engaged; a little apple-toddy on that. I happened just then to think that I never was engaged before, and nothing less than cherry-bounce would do to celebrate this glorious episode in my life. Brandy, apple-toddy and cherry-bounce; bounce, toddy, brandy; apples, brance-tapples, boundy; room seemed to dance around, bed ran against the stove, and my friend's liquor-case marched into the other room, and my friend even appeared to be carrying it. But above all confusion, and the chaos of that apartment, the name of Permit was ever on my lips, her beautiful form floating before my bewildered eyes. Even as I sank upon the bed exhausted by the violence of my emotions, the glory of my position as an engaged man burst upon me, and I murmured "Permit" as I dropped off into a slumber, whose tranquillity my babes never know.

How could it be otherwise? I dreamed of Permit. I saw her as she was—an angel. I plainly perceived (on my honor!) the wings bursting forth from her waxen shoulders. And as they moved (like the little seraphs in the pantomime), a perfumed breeze floated through the atmosphere, delighting my senses. "My Permit," I fondly whispered, as I would have clasped her in my arms; but—what a horrid transformation! In the place of her who was so ravishingly beautiful stood three large black bottles capering before me as though instinct with life. They were labelled respectively, "Brandy," "Apple-Jack," and "Cherry-Bounce." Next to Permit, candor compels me to state, that I would rather have met with those three old friends. I put out my hands to clasp them. They retired from me, and set up a hideous shouting, and gradually their proportions changed to as many representations of the "gentleman in black," by some called "Asmodeus," "Mephistopheles," "The Evil One," or a host of other significant names. I groaned in agony as I beheld this metamorphosis; and especially were the figures more terrible from the fact that they were supplied with the regular tools of their trade, viz., heavy forks with sharp prongs, which were repeatedly stuck into various vulnerable parts of my body, producing the most acute pains.

"O Permit!" I groaned. At once the demons took up the cry.

"Permit me!" shouted one. And his red-hot fork penetrated my left side, and touched my liver, thereby stirring up my bile considerably.

"Permit me!" howled another. And the relentless fork was thrust into my right eye. At

THIS THEY ALL LAUGHED. I suppose some joke was intended, but (owing to my accident) I couldn't see it.

"Permit *me!*" cried the third. The heated prongs of his fork played over my spinal ganglions like the fingers of a skilful performer on the piano—a species of *backsliding* which made me howl with pain. And "Permit!" "Permit!" rung in my ears till I awoke from my fearful dreams.

But I have not told you yet of my adventure in the honeymoon. That is true. I am sorry that I mentioned in the beginning about that, for I ran on so about my courtship, that I find I have not space to recount my search after Permit's relatives in this number, so another time must I reserve for this narrative, and for another paper.

Permit Sizer Dow married me from Spells', at Queer Corner. And the only happy days were those of my brief courtship—ah! ah! But we had a real good wedding, if it was got up in a hurry. The Spells girls were sweet, pretty creatures—and didn't they like to train with the fellows? I admire to think of that jolly wedding, when Old Spells would drink nothing but cider at the supper, and was the first man under the table; when the Misses Sprigg looked so cunning in their thin sausage ringlets, which came off at the third dance; and Old Fulks was treated by the Spells boys so often, that he began to play on the wrong side of his bridge on the violincello; when that bashful young gentleman, Tim Idds, squirmed alongside of that old maid, Miss Juniper, the whole evening, talking in a modest voice, and the Juniper was nodding, and smiling, and thanking him; and the Sprack young girls were peeking out of their corners at the pair, giggling at the fun, which I even did not half understand, until they told me she was deaf. And the compliments which were showered upon Permit and I, the invitations and the—

It just dawned upon me pretty soon that I had bought a "pig in a poke" (I have no desire to be disrespectful to my wife), and that I had never seen Permit's father or mother, brothers and sisters, and that I should just like to—that was all. So she pretty soon went from Bangor to her folks at "Licksblue the 1st," and I was to follow the next week; and to that visit to "Licksblue" must you refer for my adventure.

Beg pardon—but I find this bottle of M. C. (Morning Call) is M. T., so good morning!

THE MIDNIGHT MURDER.

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BY DR. C. C. REED.  
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THE hotel in the little Sardinian town of Chene Tonnex was, one night in the year of our Lord 1830, crowded almost to suffocation with travelers. A rain storm had driven all the wayfarers who were within reach of the inn, by an hour's driving, or even three hours' walking, to take refuge in the first shelter that offered ; and as this house was reached by several avenues, each of which was lonely and without a single building for several miles, it was soon filled to overflowing.

The servants and many of the guests repaired to the stables. The landlord and his wife occupied the settles in the bar-room ; while kitchen, hall and keeping-room presented a motley group upon each floor.

Above stairs, every bed received two, some

three occupants; and they who were awake in the night might have heard plenty of groaning, fretting, and in some cases swearing, from those who were unused to the annoyance of strange bedfellows. Among those who quietly took their beds without complaint, was a drover by the name of Claude Duret. He had returned from a successful trading away of his cattle, and now with a large sum of money and a quantity of valuable papers, had drifted toward the inn about dusk, glad to find a haven from the pelting storm; although he would much rather have proceeded to his own home, six or seven miles further on, where he knew his wife and children would be anxiously awaiting his return.

In truth, the night came on, gloomy and dreary enough to poor Blanche Duret. Never before had Claude failed to come at the appointed time. Now, she thought, perhaps he had not disposed of his cattle, and might be struggling to get them onward in this driving rain. There were long stretches of lonely roads, through which he must pass, from the great market town whither he intended to drive them; and there were plenty of dangers which the young wife might conjure up without any great effort of imagination.

She kept the children up as long as possible—until the weary little heads drooped and the sleepy eyes closed; and then, unwilling to part from them, she improvised a bed upon the floor, that she might still look upon their faces for company.

Wearily passed the night; and toward morning, worn out and exhausted with unrest and anxiety, she sank upon the floor beside her children and slept heavily. Ah! but that was a sad awaking for poor Blanche Duret!

Meantime, her husband had retired, after a good supper, and securing his money and papers about his person, he lay down with a sense of perfect security, under the roof of the crowded hotel. He had been but fairly asleep, when the landlord ushered into the chamber the man whom he had informed Duret would occupy the little chamber with him.

"Don't wake him, poor fellow!" he heard the landlord whisper. "He has been on a hard tramp with cattle to-day, and was almost too tired to eat his supper." And he shaded his lamp carefully with his hand, while he found a corner where it would not shine in the sleeper's eyes.

Claude was too sleepy to show that he was awake; and the stranger undressed and lay down beside him very softly, as if pitying his weariness. Soon the tired drover was asleep again. But not so the stranger. His great unwinking eyes wandered about the little chamber, for he had not put out his light, and examining the skylight

wondering if by chance any one should be standing on the roof in all this rain, and could look down upon him and his companion.

It was a queer conceit—but he almost fancied he could see a shadow up there, and it made him shiver; for, as yet, he had hardly made up his mind what he should do. One great crime he had already committed; and it now flashed upon the mind of Louis Pellet, that, although he had escaped from the prison at Bonneville, he might not always elude the terrible punishment that lies in wait for the murderer.

Yet the landlord had seemed to give him the clue so opportunely, that the bad man began to believe, in his wicked sophistry, that Providence had sent this unconscious victim into his way. At all events he would watch his sleeping awhile longer, and if he did not awake, why then, there was a manifest destiny to be accomplished.

At this moment Claude Duret nestled uneasily in his slumber—threw one arm above his head, and murmured the name of Blanche, and patted the pillow with the other hand, and said, "Hush, baby, father's here with you!" and then turned himself over with his face from Pellet. Soon his breathing announced that he again was sleeping heavily.

"Now is the time, thought the murderer. I could not touch him while he lay with his face in my sight, but now it is easy enough."

And stepping softly from the bed, he dressed himself thoroughly and carefully, even to putting on his cap. He then rolled his own side of the mattress over upon the sleeper, pressing it down heavily with the full weight of his own person, and rising to his full height, he employed some moments in stamping upon his breast. As he leaped from the bed, the mattress rolled back to its place with a motion so quick and sudden, that he almost shrieked with terror. He thought the dead man was after him. He smiled when he saw how still and motionless he lay. He touched him—there was not a spark of life. How easily he had been conquered!

And now to find the gold! He knew well enough that a man of common prudence would not leave it far from him; and as he had noticed that the drover had worn some of his clothes to bed, he had a clue. An under garment had a pocket, and in this he had deposited the silken purse which Blanche had netted for him only the week before.

Bad as he was, Louis Pellet shook and trembled as he touched the dead man. Twice he drew back, but at last he bethought himself of a little flask in his own pocket, the contents of which had often given him courage when he had

been on the point of failing—and to this he had recourse now.

The money was easily found when he had swallowed the stimulus, and with it a mass of papers, which he thought it would be better also to take, to prevent the discovery of the dead man's name, if it happened not to be known.

The worst part remained—to get out of the house; but, as if to favor his designs he believed, the travellers were all too weary to awake, or perhaps they would not have wondered at all at a noise upon such a night of crowded lodging as that. The landlord, too, and his wife, were up late, and had just sank into the first sound rest. All favored the bold, bad man, and he escaped.

What a house it was in the morning, when poor Claude Duret's blackened features told the terrible tale! Each terrified stranger shuddered to think that it might have been his own fate, had the landlord chanced to have bestowed upon him such a companion.

There was one man there who recognized the murdered person better than the landlord; for the latter knew only his name, while this man lived in his neighborhood, and was acquainted with his family. To him, then, was députed the undesirable task of informing poor Blanche Duret of the overwhelming loss she had sustained.

He found her just arisen, pale with the frightful night she had passed, but with newly-gathered hope, which morning mercifully brings to all anxious souls. The sun was shining upon the wet trees, the mists of last night's storm were rolling from off the hills, and all nature seemed refreshed and gladdened.

Blanche seemed surprised at the early visit of Auguste Dennet, but supposed that he came with a message from his wife, with whom she was quite intimate. When, however, she raised her heavy eyes to his face, she knew that something had happened, and he thought it the better kindness not to leave her longer in suspense. It would have melted a stouter heart than the good Auguste Dennet's, to see the tearless agony of Blanche. Not until the kind-hearted man had bethought himself of the baby up stairs, and had ran for it, with a woman's tact, and placed it within her arms, did a single tear flow. That deed saved her life or her reason, perhaps both.

Auguste went back to the inn, and related the story of her desolation, with so many children to support; and there were generous hearts among the travellers that prompted them to contribute a sum which should keep the wolf from the door, until she could do something for herself.

We must now retrace the course of the murderer, Louis Pellet. With the money and papers

he had stolen, he contrived to get to Paris, where he opened a shop as Claude Duret. In his name he organized a foreign legion for Algeria, and sailed for Oran in a government vessel. He was not heard of again until 1834. At that time he re-appeared upon the scene of his successful swindle against the French government. A large house, one of those in which gaming and every species of knavery are practised, was rented by him under the name of Francois Lissard. Here he was mixed up with those who murdered, swindled and forged, yet contrived to keep clear of all blame.

Yet Louis Pellet's life was one of agony. Not all his boldness, nor the ease with which he lent himself to criminal transactions, could banish from his heart and conscience the terrible night at the inn at Chene Tonnex. Before him always lay the blackened and distorted face of Claude Duret. His other murder had been committed in a far different and less cruel and brutal a manner. A gunshot wound had speedily and perhaps painlessly sent his victim to his last account; but here there were evidences of prolonged and frightful suffering. The other had its rise in a quarrel, and was not unprovoked. Here an innocent man, reposing confidently by his side, his sleep haunted by pure and lovely visions of home, wife and children, murmuring their names unconsciously in that very slumber, and having encountered for their sake the fatigues and vexations of the day, had fallen into it with the hope of bearing to them the next morning the gains which his weary labors had brought—O, it was frightful even to the criminal's hardened conscience!

No wonder then that a warrant to take him before the Correctional Police of Paris was received by Louis Pellet with a quaking heart. Although the offence for which he was arrested was fully specified, and was in itself trifling, yet somehow the wretched man seemed to have an impression, a presentiment, that any public charge against him, any suspicion that he was not all that he appeared, would end in a disclosure of the whole of his miserable, wicked life.

He appealed against the punishment, although it was only the light one of confinement in jail for five days. The judges were astonished at the genuine uneasiness which he exhibited, so much greater than the occasion seemed to warrant. Every step which he took, every word and look he gave, told of something concealed—some under current of guilt, which his natural boldness could not conquer. His conduct excited suspicion. Little by little it came out; one by one his antecedents were discovered, and the rumor

spread and grew. The French government becoming cognizant of the circumstances, sent to the consul of the government of Savoy resident at Paris.

Louis Pellet, having expiated the offence for which he was arrested; and from which he had appealed in vain, found himself regarded with a suspicion from which he found it difficult to escape while he remained at Paris. He left the city, but the police were upon his track, and he was arrested at Ivry, in virtue of a writ granted by the president on the demand of the Sardinian government.

If Blanche Duret had desired vengeance against the murderer of her husband, she would now have had it in full. He was executed, after a full and overwhelming proof of his identity with the slayer of poor Claude Duret and the escaped prisoner of Bonneville.

[ORIGINAL.]

CAPTAIN PAUL'S ADVENTURE.

A "CHARCOAL SKETCH."

BY WILLIAM S. WOODBRIDGE.

"I was quite young," the captain began his story, "perhaps twenty-two or three, when I took my first experience in teaching what they call a 'deestrick school' down east. I presume that I knew a precious little in those green and early days—probably about one fifth as much as I imagined I did—but after a very slight mental and a thoroughly physical examination, the committee decided that I was probably able to handle the big boys, and so passed favorably upon my qualifications. I was therefore duly installed in the rude pine board edifice at the cross-roads of the town; and during that memorable winter, I inaugurated therein what was afterwards styled 'Captain Paul's reign of terror.' The committee were gratified to learn that they had not underrated my abilities; every hiding (as they designated corporal punishment) which I was called upon to administer to some rebellious urchin—and the occasions were by no means few—was an additional evidence of my signal proficiency in the science of instruction; and I speedily came to be known among the hitherto lawless troop of male scholars, 'as a master who wouldn't take any words back.'

"It was a comparatively easy task to tame the stubborn wills of the large boys into subjection, by the application of overmastering physical force; but when it came to coercing the *female* element of the school into obedience—there was a labor compared to which I used to think the founding of the Roman empire a mere trifle! Such another set of spirits in the shape of fifteen or twenty rosy, rollicking, harum-scarum girls, filled to the lips with mischief, and perfectly reckless in their confidence that 'the master dassent whip them,' I believe mortal pedagogue was never yet afflicted with! And they were right in their assumption; I could cudgel a great lubberly delinquent of a boy, for a very slight infraction of discipline, and without disturbing a nerve; but when it came to furling a girl, and as handsome a one as any of my female pupils, my manhood rebelled—I couldn't do it—although not one of them that did not deserve it richly, and twenty times over.

"And how the witches did exult in their exemption! how deliberately, and yet with what apparent innocence, would they transgress my regulations day after day, until it had almost be-

come habitual! To be sure there were lighter punishments which could be inflicted; but these were treated with such good-humor and carelessness, that I quickly perceived there was no efficacy in them. Never was schoolmaster so hectored and bothered before; and I believe the male juveniles had to suffer a double infliction of birch on account of the unpunished delinquencies of the girls.

"But I may as well confess, before going any further, that I was most desperately in love with the ringleader of the troop, Nelly Wilson by name, a bright-eyed rustic brunette of seventeen, with a really lovable nature beneath her wild flow of life and spirits. She had, as I thought, a kind of dormant affection for me; although the end and aim of every one of her school-hours seemed to be to pester the life out of me if possible. And the minx knew how I felt towards her just as well as I did myself, though I had never told her; and, indeed, all the school seemed to know it; and I verily believe the gipsy loved to show me, by her general manner of comporting herself in school, that she had the whip-hand of me, and that she was very well aware of it. This much is necessary to be related, in order that you may perfectly understand the position of affairs in my little pine-board sovereignty, as connected with the incident which I am about to tell you.

"The night previous to the day in question, I had attended a country frolic of some kind, which had been prolonged so far into the morning, as to leave me little time for sleep before school hours. As a consequence, I was both tired and drowsy; although the young ladies of the school, who had attended the same merry-making, seemed never more alive and full of mischief. My eyelids were heavy, and my head confused all the forenoon, and in the afternoon, after combating the drowsy god for an hour, I sank into a profound slumber in my chair, regardless of school, scholars, or my duties to either.

"I had been sleeping, I suppose, for about half an hour, when I was awakened by a roar of laughter, in which the whole school joined most heartily. Angry at myself, to discover that I had thus been taken off my guard, and fairly 'caught napping,' I sprang up and sternly rapped for order. The effect was another explosion of mirth, more demonstrative than the first; every eye was looking at me, and a volley of ha-ha's! rained on me like a charge of grape and canister. Small boys looking fearfully, as though expecting an immediate visitation of birch for their breach of decorum, laughed in

spite of themselves; while as for the girls, they seemed almost convulsed with merriment, and led by Nell Wilson's silvery voice, they laughed as though they really enjoyed it—which no doubt they did.

"I was dumb for a moment with anger and amazement; and it was a full minute before I was able to thunder out a demand of the meaning of the scene. My only answer was a new burst of laughter; and thoroughly irritated, I made for one of the nearest boys, and inserting my fingers between his neck and coat collar, twitched him in no very gentle manner to the desk.

"Now tell me, you young rascal," I exclaimed, "what you are laughing at! Tell me, sir, or I'll skin you alive, as sure as—"

"Please sir, don't be angry," the terrified boy interposed, not more than half sobered by my rough discipline. "I couldn't help it, sir; but—ha, ha!—your face does look so funny!"

"A perfect shriek of mirth from the school almost drowned his last words; and dropping the urchin as I heard them, I hastily consulted a small piece of a broken mirror which I had fastened at the end of the desk. Heavens and earth!—what a spectacle did my physiognomy present at that moment! Some mischievous hand, aided by a charred coal from the stove, had during my sleep, decorated my face after a fashion most ludicrous to behold. Two great dirty bars crossed each other at right angles on my forehead, an enormous moustache graced my upper lip, and my cheeks were blacked with as fierce a pair of whiskers as ever a French grenadier could boast of. To crown the whole absurd picture, the corners of my mouth were extended upwards in a curving line most dolefully merry in effect, and altogether, I have an idea that I could have passed very creditably for a burlesque on one of the old representations of Don Quixote.

My first impulse was to be ungovernably angry; my next to wipe off the sooty cosmetic as well as I could with my handkerchief; and my third, which I immediately proceeded to put in effect, was to declare that unless the offender instantly made himself known, I should proceed to chastise every boy in school, forthwith! The threat was answered by the urchin who had already fallen under my displeasure, in a whining voice, and with the words:

"Please sir, *it wasn't a boy!*"

"I turned my eyes to the opposite side of the house. The girls had grown suddenly sober upon this announcement, and more than one of them was glancing furtively at Nelly—who, on her part, was trying to maintain a composure

which I could readily see she was far from feeling. There was little difficulty in singling out the culprit; and as little in determining upon my course.

"Nelly Wilson will remain after the others have gone," I said. "School is dismissed."

"The scholars passed slowly out, with many a sympathizing look at the criminal, and one or two of her companions stopped to whisper in her ear. When we were at length alone together, I turned away from the window, and came and sat down by her side.

"I suppose you will not deny that you did this, Nelly?" I said, mildly.

"Yes, sir—I did it," was her reply. Her eyes dropped to her desk, and studiously avoided mine.

"May I ask why?" She made no answer, but her fingers nervously nestled the leaves of a book.

"Let me speak plainly with you, Nelly," I said, throwing as much sorrow into my voice as I could well assume. "I must confess myself grieved and surprised, that you have thought proper to thus injure my feelings, and wound my pride. Tell me, Nelly Wilson, if I have not labored faithfully for your advancement—if I have not bestowed especial pains on yourself, and acted towards you more like a dear friend than a severe teacher? Tell me—have I?"

"Her lip trembled, as she gave a faint 'yes.'"

"And yet, this is the way you reward me; by holding me up to the ridicule and mirth of my scholars! Nelly, I had not expected this! From others I might have looked for it; but from *you*, whose interest has lain so near my heart, and for whose improvement I have labored so—"

"I paused; there was no necessity for my proceeding further. Her feelings were touched, and the tears were dropping thick and fast from her eyes. She seemed really so deeply moved by my words, that I thought it advisable to leave her to herself for a moment; so I proceeded to the fragment of glass, to inspect my face again. But such a face as it was! The application of the handkerchief had blackened the whole of it; and save one or two spots of white, the prevalent color was dusky enough. But I was recalled to the side of my pupil by hearing my name pronounced in a low voice.

"I have been very thoughtless and wicked," she said, "and can hardly ask you to forgive me. Tell me, sir," and she spoke beseechingly, "what I can do to show you that I know I have abused your kindness, but have resolved to do better in future!"

"‘There is one thing, Nelly,’ I replied, my voice trembling, I think, quite as much as her own; ‘just one thing, which, if you will do, you can repair the injury you have done me, and make me your firm friend forever. Will you promise?’

"‘Gladly, sir. What is it?’

"‘I wish you to leave the school.’

● Her lips quivered again, and her eyes sought my face so reproachfully, that I cordially hated myself for giving her pain.

"‘But I only want you to leave it, to become my wife!’ I hastened to add. ‘Nelly, dear Nelly Wilson, don’t you know that I love you better than anything else in this world, and want you for my own Nelly?’

"I had taken her in my arms, and kissed her four or five times, before she was well over her bewilderment. There was a glad, happy look on her face when I released her, which told me all that I was anxious to know; but as she obtained another full front view of my visage, it changed to an irresistibly comic expression.

"‘Will you be my wife, dear Nelly?’ I repeated.

"‘Wash your face, sir, and then I’ll think about it,’ she managed to articulate, with a ringing peal of mirth which fairly made the room echo—and that before the tears were fairly dry on the face of the audacious little witch! ‘Murder, what a face!’ she cried.

"I concluded to accept the advice, and so started for the water-pail with the remark:

"‘It’s evident that you were never intended for an artist, Nelly; you are laughing at your own coloring.’

"‘No,’ she retorted, with another convulsion of laughter; ‘the picture was a good one before you spoiled the effect of it with your handkerchief. O, how like the knight of the rueful countenance you did look!’

"I admitted myself rather worsted in the encounter, and devoted myself zealously for the next five minutes, in restoring my face to its original hue. I anticipated no end of hectoring from the merry-hearted girl on the subject; but when she discovered, as she shortly did, that my frantic efforts to kiss her had somewhat darkened the red of her lips, besides leaving several unseemly blotches of charcoal on her cheek, she was quite content to drop the whole subject. Well—I walked home with her that night, and coaxed her at last, to say in so many words, that she did love me, and that she would marry me."

"And did she?" we all asked in a breath.

"Ask her yourselves; that’s her by the table yonder, darning stockings, and laughing just

like the Nelly Wilson of that old pine school-house, to hear me tell this story !”

“What—Aunt Nelly ? Is it possible she is the heroine of your tale ?”

“Certainly. And I tell you what, boys,” and Captain Paul removed his pipe from his mouth, and slapped his knee emphatically, “after seeing a great many nor’ westers, and any quantity of rough sea weather, I do declare that I never knew so awful a moment as that in which I discovered the charcoal on my face; which was put there by the hand of that same Nelly Wilson !”

[ORIGINAL.]

A TERRIBLE NIGHT IN BALTIMORE.

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BY PERCY GARNETT.  
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I AM no politician. I am a provision dealer—a wholesale provision dealer, doing business in New York city. Having commenced my veritable history with the above assertion, it is necessary that I should inform the reader how it was that I was a member of the New York delegation to the Democratic Convention held in the city of Baltimore last year.

One evening in the latter end of May, I was seated with my wife in our pretty house in Eighth Street, enjoying a fragrant cup of tea, for if there is one thing that I'm a good judge of it is tea. My wife had been shopping, and while I was sipping my Hyson flavored with Orange Pekoe, she was showing me her purchases. She was expatiating on a "love of a bonnet," when we were both startled by a violent ring at the bell; and in a minute or two afterwards a servant entered, informing me that Mr. Lawrence Ardeu wished to see me immediately. As Ardeu was a particular friend of mine, I immediately ordered him to be admitted.

"Gunby," said Ardew, as soon as he had paid his respects to my wife (I should have told you before that my name is Jonathan Gunby), "Gunby, I want you to do me a great favor."

"What is it, my dear fellow?" I replied. I could afford to be affectionate, for I knew that Ardew was too rich to want money.

"You know I am a politician," said Ardew.

"I know you are," I returned, "and much good has it done you. To my certain knowledge you have not received a cent benefit from it yet; on the other hand you have spent a good many hundred dollars."

"Just wait till —— is elected president, and then you will see what you will see; but, that is not the question. I am a delegate to the Baltimore Convention, and I want you to act as my substitute."

"What!" I cried, jumping up from my chair in excitement, "I, Jonathan Gunby, wholesale provision dealer, act as a member of a political convention! never, my dear friend, never!"

"But you must. I will pay all expenses, and the trip will do you good. I have noticed that you seem to be a good deal thinner than you used to be, a change is the very thing for you. Baltimore is a beautiful city. The fact is, I have an important law suit coming on, and it is utterly impossible that I can leave New York. You must do this favor for me, my dear Gunby."

"But, Ardew, I never attended a political meeting in my life," I replied, somewhat softened by the fact that all my expenses would be paid. "I should make a blockhead of myself, for I know nothing of the rules and regulations of such assemblies."

"You don't want to know anything; all that you have to do is to vote through thick and thin for ——."

"But I don't like the man."

"You have nothing to do with that. I do like him and you will be voting for me."

"You are right—I forgot that."

"Jonathan shall not go to that awful rowdy city, Baltimore," said my wife. "He will be killed by the 'Plug Uglies,' 'Blood Tubs' or 'Black Snakes.' It's not safe to walk the streets there. I'll never consent to his going."

"You need have no fear on that head, madam," said Ardew; "they have got a new police there, and Baltimore is now one of the quietest cities in the Union."

I need not detail any more of the conversation, suffice it to say, that Ardew persuaded me to act in his place, and a hint of a handsome present from the monumental city, so modified my wife that she too gave her consent.

On the appointed day, provided with the necessary vouchers, I started on my journey—having first faithfully promised my wife that I would not venture in the streets of Baltimore after dark. I shall not detail the particulars of my journey; were I to do so, I might describe how crowded we were; how we were annoyed by a squalling infant that it was utterly impossible to silence; how we were delayed in the crossing of the Susquehanna by some accident to the ferry-boat; how everybody talked politics until I was perfectly sick of it; how I tried to read, but could not on account of the perfect Babel around me; how I endeavored to make fun of the boys who sold apples, and had the laugh turned against me by those youthful vendors of that wholesome fruit. All this, and a great deal more, I might tell, but as every traveller goes through the same experiences it would only be repeating an old story.

We reached Baltimore at last, and I was immediately driven to Barnum's Hotel. I had some difficulty in making my way up to the clerk's counter, the hall was so crowded with people.

"All full, sir," said the gentlemanly clerk, as I pulled the book towards me to enter my name.

There was no help for it; I went round to the Gilmor House, and received the same reply. It was the same with the Eutaw, the Howard House and half a dozen other hotels. It was getting dark, and my case began to grow desperate. I began to think that I should have to sleep in the hack all night.

"Try Old Town, Bill," said a friend to the hackman, who saw my dilemma.

"There are only third and fourth rate inns there," said the driver, "and perhaps the gentleman would not like to lodge there for a night?"

"Anywhere that I can get a bed, my good fellow," I returned. "It is no use being particular at such a time as this."

The horses' heads were turned round, and we proceeded down Baltimore Street over a bridge which spanned a muddy stream of water, called Jones's Falls, I believe. We then plunged into a mass of intricate, narrow streets, and at last stopped before the door of a very ordinary looking tavern. It bore a nondescript looking sign which I was told represented a golden angel, by which name the tavern was known.

I entered and made my stereotyped inquiry whether I could have a bed there for the night. The landlord, a thick, burly looking man with a gleam of latent humor in his face, shook his head and repeated to me the hateful words—"all full."

I turned to go away, but was recalled by the voice of the host.

"Would you mind sharing a bed with another party?" said he.

I glanced out of doors; it was quite dark, and a cold wind had arisen from the north.

"If there is no help for it, I suppose I must," I replied, "although to tell you the truth, it is by no means agreeable to me;" and I inwardly heaped denunciations on Ardew's head for persuading me to be his substitute.

"Your bedfellow is a quiet fellow when he is asleep—although I must say he is rather violent when annoyed. He sleeps very soundly, and all you have to do is to be careful not to awaken him. He has been in bed some time."

I must make a humiliating confession to the reader; I am not a brave man. I have often tried to persuade myself that I am, but stern truth compels me to state that a greater coward does not exist than myself. The landlord's description of my bedfellow was anything but assuring, and I was on the point of declining, when the proprietor of the Golden Angel, no doubt reading what was transpiring in my mind, exclaimed:

"You are not afraid, are you?"

"Afraid! I should think not, indeed," I returned, for I was too much a coward to brave being thought one. I accept your offer of half a bed. Bring me some brandy and water and a cigar."

I sat down at one of the little tables in the bar-room, and puffing away at my cigar I tried to persuade myself that I was very jolly. It was a miserable attempt, however. I had previously supped at a restaurant in a more modern part of the city. After my cigar was finished, I asked to be shown to my chamber. The landlord took upon himself the task of being my conductor, and I followed him up a narrow, rickety staircase. We kept on ascending until we reached the top of the house, when we entered a moderately sized room, but much cleaner than I had expected to find it. The ceiling was very low, and inclined in front to the slope of the roof. The apartment contained but one bed, which was placed against the wall near the door. At the opposite end of the chamber was a table, placed between two windows which looked out on the roof.

The landlord placed the lamp on the table, and I noticed that he shielded the light with his hand as he passed near the bed.

"Be sure and don't take the light near him," whispered the proprietor of the Golden Angel; "nothing wakes him sooner than that. You see,

I don't know how he might like my putting another man with him; and he's a very ugly customer when he's riled, I can tell you."

"I shall be careful," I replied.

"That's right! Good night," he whispered, and left the room.

He had no sooner gone than I cautiously sat down, taking care not to make the least noise. I then calmly surveyed my position. It was certainly not a very enviable one. According to the landlord's account, my companion for the night was anything but an amiable character. If I should chance to awaken him I knew not what might occur. He might assault me dangerously before I could enter into any explanation. I half resolved to pass the night in the chair, and not retire to bed at all. But it was one of those old-fashioned, high-backed chairs, and made such an uncomfortable seat that I soon got tired. I then ventured to glance round the room. My eyes naturally fell on the bed. There was one thing that consoled me, my companion appeared to be in a deep sleep, for he did not even move. I could see the ridge made by his feet at the end of the bed, and that was all. I also noticed that the bed was a very large one. The man who had possession of it lay near the wall, and there was plenty of space between him and the outside for me to lie without touching him. I screwed my courage up, and began to undress—but I suddenly remembered the landlord's words, that the stranger was "an ugly customer when he was riled," which made me desist. The thought struck me that I might manage to lie on the floor, but a moment's examination settled that question in the negative, for the floor was entirely bare, and the air blew very cold through the wide chinks in the planking. I cast my eyes up to the ceiling, and noticed for the first time that a heavy beam studded with numerous hooks ran through the apartment; but as I was not a bird and could not perch there, this discovery was but of little use to me.

Half an hour passed away in this state of indecision. I stole cautiously to one of the windows, and gazed on the beautiful city bathed in the light of a full moon. How quiet and calm everything looked! But the air felt fresh and cold, and I closed the window and resumed my seat on the chair. I then found myself wondering what avocation my friend in bed followed. I had forgotten to ask the landlord. I suddenly cast my eyes on a heap of clothes which lay on a trunk, covered over with a handkerchief, no doubt belonging to the sleeper. My curiosity got the better of my politeness, and before I scarcely knew what I was about, I found myself

examining his apparel. The handkerchief which covered them was a coarse cotton one, and his clothes were of coarse homespun, and were such as are usually worn by drovers. My companion then was evidently a drover—a rough class of men who usually stand upon very little ceremony.

Partially undressed as I was, I began to feel very cold—but before I ventured into bed I determined to try an experiment to see if the drover slept soundly or not. I took off one of my boots, and holding it up let it fall to the floor. I had taken the precaution to leave the bed-room door open, so that I could make a run for it if necessary. I fixed my eyes on the bed as I let the boot fall. The drover was evidently a sound sleeper, for, although the noise made was considerable, he did not make the slightest motion. This decided me, and I hastily finished undressing and crept into bed.

Of course I was very careful not to touch my companion. I do not know how long I lay awake, but the novelty of my situation drove sleep from my eyelids for some time. By degrees, however, the strangeness of my position wore off. I felt reassured by my bedfellow's sound sleep, and the gentle murmuring of the breeze outside caused me to follow his example.

I have no idea how long I slept before I commenced to dream. I suddenly, however, thought that my companion woke up, and sat upright in bed; that he glared around him, and at last his eyes fell upon me. He then uttered a terrible cry and threw himself upon me. In spite of my natural cowardice I saw that if I did not struggle I should be killed. I thought I seized him by the throat, and tightening my grasp, I saw him getting black in the face. His hands fell powerless by his side, a smothered groan escaped him, but still I pressed his throat tighter, tighter—his face grew blacker and blacker.

In an agony of fear I awoke, and what was my horror and dismay to find that my hand was really pressing my companion's throat! He did not move nor stir, and his body felt as cold as ice.

"Good God!" I exclaimed, aloud. "Can he be dead?"

I jumped out of bed. Morning had dawned, although the sun had not yet risen. I rushed to the window and pulled back the curtain. I then ran to the bed again and looked at my companion. My worst fears were realized.

He was dead—black in the face—strangled in my sleep!

I shall not attempt to describe my sensations at this horrid spectacle. My body was bathed in a cold perspiration, my hands trembled, and

for a few moments I believe I was bereft of my senses. I recovered by degrees—but it was only to realize in a more acute degree the horrors of my situation. There lay my victim—and I was a murderer! My trial, conviction and the hideous gallows all passed in rapid review before me. What defence could I make? Who would believe me? I sat down, buried my face in my hands, and sobbed like a child. My wife, my own comfortable home, should I ever see them again?

What was to be done? Should I arouse the house and make a clean breast of it? But what could I say? Tell them I had killed a man in my sleep? Not a soul would believe the story. Could I effect my escape? Impossible—the crime would be discovered before I could leave the city, and I should be arrested—and then the law would take its course, and I should be hanged by the neck until I was dead.

"Hanged by the neck!" Yes, that would be my fate. As this terrible thought crossed my mind, I cast my eyes round the chamber, and they fell upon the beam with the hooks in it. From thence they wandered to the handkerchief covering the dead man's clothes. A means of safety suddenly suggested itself to my mind. Suppose I could make it appear that the man had committed suicide. Yes, that was my only chance, and I determined to put it into execution.

I took the dead man's handkerchief and advanced to the corpse with a great deal of repugnance, but with more courage than I could have anticipated, my own fearful situation no doubt animating me to an extent I should never otherwise have dreamed of. I made a noose in the handkerchief, and slipped it over the dead man's neck. I then lifted the body out of bed, and standing on a chair fastened the other end of the handkerchief to a hook in the beam. I now let the body go, and it swung in space!

I jumped into bed, and shut my eyes to close the horrid sight from my gaze. I determined to wait there until somebody should come into the room, and then pretend that I knew nothing at all about it, but that the man must have got up in the night and hanged himself.

I lay quaking and trembling for over an hour. It grew broad daylight. I felt the sun shining directly on the bed, but I dare not open my eyes for fear that I should encounter the dangling corpse. Suddenly I heard the steps of two men on the stairs. They appeared to be carrying something heavy between them. The long anticipated moment was approaching. In a few seconds more they would discover the body. My life depended in a great degree upon their

opinion. If they were deceived by my ruse, others might be also.

The door opened, and two men entered the chamber, placing something heavy on the floor.

"Well, I'm blessed if the man hasn't bin and hanged himself again," exclaimed a voice, which I recognized to be the landlord's.

"By golly! that's true," said the other man. "No, I see how it is, the stranger found out the trick you played on him, and not liking the idea of sleeping with a corpse, he tucked him up there to get him out of the way."

"You're right," replied the landlord; "well, he's a cool 'un anyhow, and would you believe it, last night I thought he was a coward?—that only shows how easy it is to be mistaken in people. And now he sleeps as sound as a church; let's be careful not to wake him."

I breathed freely; for I immediately understood the whole matter. The landlord had put me to sleep with a dead man. I heard them take down the body and put it into a coffin—for it was that they had brought with them. They carried it away, and I was left to myself. With my mind thus relieved I fell asleep, and enjoyed two hours delicious slumber. I then got up, dressed myself, and proceeded coolly down stairs.

"Good morning," said I to the landlord, who was behind the bar.

"Good morning, sir," he replied, sheepishly; "I hope you slept well."

"Splendidly," I returned; "my bedfellow gave me some trouble at first, but I soon got rid of him."

"I know you did," returned mine host, with a knowing wink. "Well, I must say you are the coolest chap I ever saw."

Not another word passed between us with reference to the affair. I afterwards learned from the conversation of people while I was at breakfast, that my companion for the night was a drover, who, having made a ruinous speculation in cattle, had committed suicide by hanging himself in the chamber the night before.

I left the Golden Angel that morning, having obtained quarters at Barnum's Hotel. I went to the Convention, voted six hundred times for —, and returned home, having given full satisfaction to Mr. Ardew.

I told my adventure to my friends—not as I have told it to you, dear reader, but with the same construction that the landlord of the Golden Angel put upon it. Everybody thought that I had displayed extraordinary coolness and intrepidity. There is one thing, however, to which I have fully made up my mind, and that is, I will never attend another political convention as long as I live.

[ORIGINAL.]

THE MADHOUSE, AND ITS INMATES.

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BY EDWARD M. FRANKLIN. .  
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It was a large gloomy-looking structure, built of dark-colored stone, supported by two heavy wings, and situated upon a gentle eminence just at the outer suburbs of the city. I paused by the gate, and placed my hands upon its latch.

“ Shall we enter ? ” I asked of my companion.

“ Since you have mentioned it, yes, ” he replied ; “ although I shall probably be unable to dispossess myself of the melancholy associations which such a place always casts around one for days to come. It seems so horribly desolate a thing, my ‘ dear friend, ’ ” he continued, as we walked slowly up the bare avenue leading to the entrance, “ to entomb yourself from the glorious sunlight of such a day as this, even for a few moments, in that dreary house ! However, it

seems to me like its unfortunate inmates—wearing a cold, sombre exterior, with no warm and pleasant life within.”

Our ring at the door was answered by the usher, and we were admitted to the interior of the building. Accompanied by one of the keepers, we proceeded to examine it with the melancholy interest which such scenes are apt to inspire. There was indeed little of cheerfulness about the place or its belongings; the poor wrecks of miserable humanity surrounded us, and the spectacle was fraught with the most solemn suggestions. Seated on benches, or lying in coarse hammocks, slung from the wall, were the harmless lunatics of the establishment; some of them sitting idly with folded hands and vacant eyes, others playing with pieces of string or wood, which had been furnished for their occupation; and one, who particularly drew my attention, was sitting before the grated window earnestly counting aloud the panes which composed it. Numbering them in their order, and indicating each with his raised finger, he would slowly count *one, two, three, four, five*—and then, apparently losing the pane he had last numbered, he would begin again at the first, count down to the sixth, with the same result, and so continue his strange employment, as the keeper informed us, throughout the entire day!

“This is his sole occupation,” the latter observed; “he has been here now for almost four years, every day of which he has spent in this way before that very window! He was an optician before he came here, and lost his mind over some improvement in telescopes, which he had projected. He meant, I have understood, to introduce *five* new glasses into the tube of the instrument; and he seems now to be conscious of nothing save the numerals up to six.”

Ranged in the middle of one of the stone-paved corridors was a row of iron-barred cells; and as we passed hurriedly before them, the awful spectacle of glaring eyes, gnashing teeth, hands working convulsively at the bars, and the sound of the most horrible yells and laughter from within, assured us that this was the maniacs’ quarter. Leaving these unpleasant sights and sounds behind us, we gained the extremity of the corridor, and awaited the movements of the keeper. He had paused in a corner somewhat remote from us, and as he beckoned us to approach, we unhesitatingly repaired to the spot. A man was sitting on the stone flagging, his head bent, so that his face was entirely invisible to us, and his right hand busily engaged in tracing with a piece of chalk, on the smooth surface of the stones, the name “Lucille.” As often as he had written it,

his left hand, with a damp cloth which it grasped, erased it; and thus he continued for several moments, alternately writing and erasing, and apparently unconscious of our presence.

"This is *his* employment," said the keeper, in a low voice, "or rather part of it. He will show you the rest in a moment."

The man at this instant suspended his occupation and looked up. He seemed to be a tall, slender person, of not more than thirty years of age, with keen black eyes and a fair, pale face, which wore an expression which I cannot hope to describe. There was constantly in it such a mingling of deep melancholy with inanimate unconsciousness—the perfect absence of soul—as would have drawn tears from the eyes, and pity from the breast, of the most hardened. He discovered no surprise or alarm at seeing us so near him, but simply raising his finger, whispered, impressively:

"Hush! hush! She is dying—*she is dead!*"

His hands fell listlessly in his lap, and his head fell forward upon his chest. A moment he remained thus, and then, without elevating his eyes, he began to sing a plaintive air, which, familiar as it was to me, I had never heard so sweetly rendered. His voice was subdued to a low key, and had all the liquid depth and expression of a woman's. Singing it through once, he turned again to the employment in which we had interrupted him, and continued to trace the name, Lucille, upon the flagging.

"His story is simple, but very touching," the keeper observed. "He has been with us full seven years, without the slightest change, either in his manner of occupying himself, which you have seen, or in the lamentable condition of his mind. It was caused by the death of a beautiful girl, whose name he is writing on the stones, to whom he was affianced, and whom he loved devotedly.

"They were to have been united upon the very day following that on which she died; and the poor youth, returning after an absence of a week, was informed that his darling had been seized but a few hours before with a malignant fever, and now lay at the point of death! Hurrying to her bedside, he found her in the last moments of dissolution, perfectly insensible of the presence of the weeping friends and relatives around her, and faintly singing, in her unconsciousness, the touching little air which you have just heard. She died without recognizing him, and his mind was utterly prostrated and overborne by the cruel shock. His helpless, harmless insanity is, I think, the most sorrowful picture of human woe that my experience has ever

shown me. He seems, deranged as he is, devoted wholly to the memory of his lost Lucille."

The poor demented being quickly raised his eyes as he caught the sound of the name which was half-written beneath his hand, and raising his finger again, he exclaimed, in a thrilling whisper, "Lucille, did you say? Hush!—hush! She is dying—*she is dead!*" And once more he commenced the singing of the plaintive air.

"Let us go," my friend whispered, wearily taking my arm. "I have seen enough. I can bear no more misery such as this!"

And so, re-passing the iron cages of the howling maniacs, and the window where the crazed optician still drearily numbered the panes, we stepped with sighs of relief into the cheerful sunshine, from which we seemed to have been buried.



[ORIGINAL.]

THE BROTHERS.

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BY MARY A. NOWELL.  
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A LONG and lofty apartment, the dining room of a noble old English mansion house, was redolent of perfume from the masses of mingled honeysuckle and roses that grew profusely around the balconied windows, closely curtaining the interior of the room from outer inspection. A table stretched half way across the centre, from which a snow white cloth—on which were embroidered the arms of the Herberts—reached the floor, and the quantity of silver plate, gold-lined, and bearing the same crest, proving that the present family retained the old heirlooms held so sacred among the English nobility.

Yet they who now occupied the mansion of the Herberts, were far from inheriting the wealth of that ancient house. A few pieces of forest land were left from the wreck made by the last possessor ; the old mansion itself, in many parts sadly out of repair ; and the untouched silver, the books in the library and the time-worn furniture, were all that remained of former glories. In the stables, where once a splendid stud of horses,

surpassed only by the king's, were to be seen, was silence and emptiness ; and the broad woods that once waved over the wide domain, presented only a waste of low stumps with a few green leaves springing out from the ruins.

Harry Herbert was a spendthrift, a sensualist—the one blot upon a fair escutcheon—the shame and disgrace of good and pious parents, who lived to see their fair mansion falling into decay, through the recklessness of their son, and then laid down their gray hairs in the family tomb.

The estate went to the child of a dead cousin of Harry Herbert—a retired officer in the navy, whose half pay scarcely kept his family in the necessaries of life. It was a godsend to Richard Herbert, this decaying old mansion and its surroundings. He brought to its shades a gentle and beautiful wife and twin boys, and began life again, more like a country gentleman than as the heir of the Herberts. It suited him better to be called by his naval title of lieutenant, than addressed as Lord Herbert ; and his voluntary desire to put aside the distinctions of a mere name, made him intensely popular with the surrounding gentry. In proportion as he laid by rank he gained friends. His slight lameness made him a hero at once, and perhaps no one of the family, from time immemorial, was half so much beloved as the present incumbent of Herbert Hall.

But Richard Herbert, who had all his days before this, experienced only hard fare and indifferent lodging, had scarcely lived two years in the comparative plenty and happiness of the old estate, when he was called to resign all earthly possessions, leaving his widow and children, however, in undisputed right to all that had descended to him, and an interest also in his country's grateful appreciation of his service. The king himself—the hearty old sailor-king, William IV.—whose battles Richard Herbert had helped to fight, granted an interview to the widow, and shook the hands of the two fair boys who reminded him of his old officer, as he graciously declared. He persisted in calling their mother Lady Herbert ; but she never wore the title, preferring to follow the wishes of her unassuming husband.

On the day of rich perfume, one of June's loveliest and last, the twin boys, now grown almost to man's estate, were about to leave their mother and home for the first time in their lives. It was no wonder that a world of sad imaginings clustered around the mother's heart. They were to depart before dinner, but a luncheon had been prepared, and they were trying hard to partake of it. But at each look at the gentle and still beautiful lady who sat at the table's head, or at

the empty seat at the opposite side, where their father's place remained vacant, the boy's tears would flow, and they audibly regretted that they had ever thought of leaving her so desolate as she would be in their absence.

Then she would bravely urge upon them that it was but right they should see something of the world, and that she would not have them mope their lives away in that secluded place; and gaily told them that she would be glad of a little respite from waiting upon them. Ah, how little did the mother's heart agree with the light words she spoke! How gladly would she have toiled to earn their daily bread, rather than miss the affectionate pressure of their loving hands.

Years ago, when Harry Herbert was a young man and still untainted with the vices that deformed his after life, he had begged his cousin Richard to call one of his beautiful twins by his name, and accordingly they bore the names of Harry and Richard; the latter for his father.

It had been Mrs. Herbert's wish that the young men should travel whenever their education should be completed; and, feeling that she could trust them away, she now urged their departure, that she might the sooner have them at home with her without any anticipation of future parting, save the inevitable one which we all try to avoid thinking of, and which she put far from her.

The luncheon stood almost untasted. Again and again they promised their mother to write to her immediately on their arrival at Calais; and again they assured her that no petty jealousy or rivalry, such as had sometimes arisen in their school days, should ever mar their brotherly love abroad, where no mother's gentle interference could break the spell.

The brothers looked at each other meaningly, when they said this, as if there was a slight reservation in their minds in regard to some subject unknown to their mother. Mrs. Herbert caught the look, and a sense of pain shot through her heart. She knew that there was a boyish attachment to the young and lovely Helen York; but she had made no doubt that Harry would, as usual, give place to Richard. She was determined, on reflection, to attach no importance to the affair whatever. She loved Helen York like a daughter, for she was the orphan child of a dear friend, who, dying, besought her to have a care over her.

As far as might be, she kept her promise; but Helen's relatives claimed her half the year. She was now expecting her, but hoped, for her boys' sakes, that she would not arrive until they were gone. The very hour that they had left Herbert

Hall, brought her thither; and the mother who was still weeping over their departure, was cheered by her coming, although the sight of her brought back that one quick throb of pain, by reminding her of the look she had seen. Helen was disappointed; she had ridden night and day, in order to see them before they went; and now, the great, hollow-sounding room that had echoed to their voices, seemed sad and cheerless.

A few days, and all other feelings were merged in the strange fact that no news was received from the wanderers. Could they so forget a sacred promise? Or had any thing happened? We can only solve the question by following the course of the travellers.

There were scornful words and loud reproaches between the two young brothers on the very night of their arrival at Calais, on the subject of Helen York; but it was amicably adjusted by a mutual resolve to refer the matter to her own disposal on their return. The blooming, azure-eyed beauty had a little spice of coquetry in her composition, and she had sometimes preferred Harry, sometimes Richard—enough, at least, to give hope to each that he was the favored one. So they retired that night with this comfortable persuasion.

Unfortunately their altercation had been heard by the occupant of the adjoining chamber, and their words were ringing in his ears when he fell asleep—too early to hear their better purpose at the close. He had judged only by the loud tones and angry response; for he was a Frenchman, and understood not a word of English.

The brothers had retired to separate beds in the same apartment. Richard fell asleep immediately; but Harry remained awake from a strange sense of suffocation. He was relieved in some measure by a profuse flow of blood from the nose, but he still longed to get into the open air. Unconscious that the purple stream had almost deluged his bed, and feeling unwilling to awake Richard from his sound sleep, he dressed and went out into the street, which now lay in an unbroken sheet of moonlight. The beauty of the night tempted him onward, and he soon found himself near the channel. One thought to the mother he had left, and to that still dearer being, went, freighted with love, over the waters; and he was just turning to seek the hotel again, when he was seized by a band of smugglers who believed him a spy. Thinking he had watched their operations with a cargo of liquor, they determined that he should have no opportunity of betraying them. Their only resource was a press gang, to which they lost no time in delivering the unfortunate young man.

Richard did not awake until the sun shone broadly into the chamber. Missing his brother, he rang the bell to inquire for him. The landlord entered the room, but started back with such a genuine look of dismay, that Richard started up in affright. Following with his eyes the pointing finger, he was shocked to see that Harry's bed was stained with blood; and still more so, when the landlord loudly accused him of murder.

"Murder!" cried Richard, "he was my brother—my own twin brother."

"Ah, that is right! Stick to that! It is a fine story, but won't avail you in court, depend on it." Richard heard no more. He had fainted, and when he recovered, it was only to be dragged to prison.

Such was the terrible history that found its way into the English newspapers, and which was not long in reaching the inhabitants of the Hall. The mother was listening to Helen York, who had been carefully selecting the choicest articles of news. Her listener was lying carelessly on the sofa, half smiling, half sighing at Helen's endeavors to entertain her. Her thoughts were with her absent boys. A shriek from Helen made her start up, but before she could reach her, the girl lay at her feet in a dead faint. Mrs. Herbert snatched the paper from her grasp and read.

Before an hour had gone by, they were on their way to Dover, and thence, with all possible speed, across the channel. One thing there was that shed comfort upon both. This was the conviction of Richard's innocence, however dark the mystery that enveloped it. They had no more doubt of it, than if they had seen Harry living before them. But O, the meeting between the mother and son! and between the lovers; for the mystery was past that hid the state of Helen's heart from herself or from him. She mourned for Harry as a sister mourns, but her love was given to him who, in all probability, was to suffer a disgraceful death.

But Harry! where—where was Harry, in this dark hour? Almost worse to bear was the uncertainty of his fate to the mother, than even the certainty of Richard's terrible death. And now came on the trial, from the dreadful evidence of which there were no opposing circumstances. The Frenchman's tale—the landlord's overwhelming evidence—the missing brother—all had their weight in the chain that was winding itself around Richard Herbert.

Why do we dwell upon it? There was autumn sunshine upon that day. There were crimson and golden leaves that showered upon his head

as he passed to execution, and there were the beautiful clouds that the wind musters upon the blue sky of that richly-colored season. And nature was as choice in her tints upon that day as if a king were going to his coronation instead of a felon to his death. And, from a window of the hotel, away up at the very topmost room, Mrs. Herbert and Helen caught his glance, firm and composed, as he passed.

"Now to find Harry, if the earth contains him!" hoarsely whispered the bereaved mother. And she went home to prepare for that long and almost hopeless journey, which, before a week had passed, she meant to commence.

Ah, but that was a dreary sight—the spectacle of that hideous gallows, when the crowd had deserted it, and it stood out, bare and lone, upon the wide heath that chill autumn afternoon! So thought a solitary shepherd, whose way led over the heath, and who was appalled and terrified at the sight, of which he had not heard. He started at finding himself so near the sad spectacle. He grew pale, and his knees knocked together as he heard a low moan from above. It was such a wail as can only come from a breaking heart, or from the severest physical suffering. Perhaps this was both.

The shepherd was a manly, kind-hearted being, and the moan went to his very soul. He lost no time in cutting down the tremulous body and bearing it to the hut nearest the scene of distress. The shepherd's best clothes were freely offered and accepted, after Richard had been recruited by a night's rest. There was danger in remaining here a moment—and then the sight of that hideous gallows! When the second night came, the shepherd's brother bore him far away, under the cover of the darkness, while his preserver started at the same moment for the Hall, with the tidings, which of course must be kept as secret as death from all others.

At Havre, Harry had contrived to make his escape from the ship to which the press gang had conveyed him; and, by the aid of a generous stranger to whom he told his story, he procured some clothing and money to bear his expenses home; or, as the stranger said, better still, to help some poor fellow under similar circumstances. He was procuring his passport, when a man suddenly staggered towards him and fell into his arms. It was Richard—so pale, so altered, that he would never have known him had he not pronounced the name of Harry.

Far and wide the mother wandered, restless and unsatisfied, yet still dreaming that she might, some day, find her Harry. Like the poor moth—

er in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's last exquisite poem—the woman's sad wail for her son's :

"Dead! *both* my boys dead!"

she felt that it was against nature, that each home should not have *one*—and how often she exclaimed like her,

"God! how this house feels!"

But at the commencement of the wintry storms, she stayed her footsteps at her own door. She and Helen sat over the drawing-room fire, one with some unfinished work that had laid idle in the basket since the parting hour of mother and sons ; and the other with a book. There was no interest in either. A funeral sound seemed wailing in the pine tops above the house ; a settled gloom spread itself over their hearts. Suddenly the old shepherd was ushered into the room ; brought privately by the servant who had attended the twins in their infancy. He would see no one but her, to conduct him to her mistress. He had been delayed—taken ill on the road, and had not dared trust his tidings with another. Now he told what shook them like a tempest. Did he say that Richard could never come home ? never brighten that house with his presence ?

The mother's heart would have given the lie to such a saying, even if her eyes had not seen standing at that very door by which the old man had entered, two living, breathing forms that wore the semblance of her twin boys ! Yes, they were there ! hand in hand, as loving and affectionate as when, a thousand times, they had come in from play or study, and with as loving kisses for her as then. No need now for Helen York's coquetry. She had made her selection when Richard was to be executed as a murderer. And Harry, without a murmur, gave her up to his love.

There were years of undarkened sunshine in that home ; all the brighter for the clouds that had lowered over it ; and when time had blunted the sting of disappointment in Harry's heart, he too brought to it a fair young bride, who never dreamed that Helen had won his first love.
